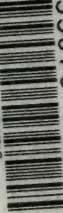


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LUCAN'S PHARSALIA



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THE

# PHARSALIA OF LUCAN

TRANSLATED INTO BLANK VERSE

BY

SIR EDWARD RIDLEY

SOMETIME FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD

ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

'Heard ye the din of battle bray?'

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED

181598  
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1905

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1905



TO THE

VERY REV. H. MONTAGU BUTLER, D.D.

MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

BY

AN OLD HARROW PUPIL



# PREFACE

TO

THE SECOND EDITION

---

IN offering to the public another edition of this work I have taken the opportunity of revising and correcting the text where it seemed to be necessary or advisable to do so.

With the exception of Francken's second volume, comprising Books VI.-X., I am not aware that any new book on Lucan has appeared since my own translation was published in 1896. But Francken's readings and commentary certainly throw new light on a variety of difficult and obscure passages, and I have in more cases than one taken advantage of his careful yet ingenious suggestions. I need not repeat that I make no claim to be a learned or a critical scholar; and I confess, for instance, that I found myself puzzled, when first I had to deal with it, with the phrase 'Stantes serpente gigantes,' Book IX. 771 (656 of the original). I took refuge in a literal translation. But Francken gives the clue required when he points to an altar at Pergamus which shows the giants fashioned with tails of serpents. There are, however, many instances where, without the aid of a new commentator, I have found occasion to rectify what I must admit to have been inaccuracies, and to improve or replace lines which were faulty; and I venture to hope that this revised edition may meet with approval.

E. R.

1905.

a



# PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION

---

THE poet Lucan was born in A.D. 39 at Corduba (Cordova), which was then the capital of the Roman province of Bætica or Southern Spain. He was of a distinguished family, and one of his uncles was Seneca the philosopher. In the year after his birth his father migrated to Rome with his family, and there the young Lucan, as he grew up, received his education. Cornutus, a Stoic, was one of his teachers; and the doctrines of that school are strongly marked in the work of the poet. Very early in life Lucan began to write poems, which he declaimed to the applause of his listeners; and when Nero ascended the throne in 54 A.D. he and the poet were on friendly terms. The Emperor, however, was also a composer of verse, and the two having been rivals at a public contest, the prize was adjudged to Lucan, the result of which was that he was forbidden to publish or recite any more of his compositions. This seems to have happened about 64 A.D.; and shortly afterwards the conspiracy of Piso was formed, in which Lucan took part. The plot was discovered, and the poet begged for his life, but received the order to die. After the fashion of the times, he opened his veins and expired in a hot bath, A.D. 65, at the early age of twenty-six, 'inheritor

of unfulfilled renown.' For in these years he had written the 'Pharsalia;' and it seems probable that he composed the whole of it between his twenty-first and twenty-sixth years.

The poem comprises the events of about two years, from the beginning of 49 B.C. to near the close of 48 B.C., and therefore describes an historic action which took place rather more than a hundred years before the time at which it was written. The struggle between Cæsar and Pompeius for the rule of Rome was then entering into its final phase. Crassus, the third of the Triumvirs, had been defeated and slain by the Parthians about four years before; Julia, Cæsar's daughter and Pompeius' wife, had died in 54 B.C.; Cæsar had completed his conquest of Gaul; and the two great rivals were face to face.

The events of the two years in question may be shortly stated thus :

49 B.C. *January*.—Cæsar crosses the Rubicon and enters Italy, while Pompeius and the Senators who adhere to his cause withdraw from Rome. (Book I.)

*March*.—Pompeius quits Brundisium and sails to Epirus, leaving all Italy in the hands of his rival. (Book II.)

*April*.—Cæsar visits Rome and besieges Marseilles. (Book III.)

*June 23 to August 2*.—Cæsar conducts a victorious campaign against Pompeius' generals on the Ebro. (Book IV.)

*September*.—Curio, one of Cæsar's lieutenants, is defeated and slain by Juba in Africa. (Book IV.)

*December*.—Cæsar again visits Rome, where he is elected Consul for the ensuing year. (Book V.)

48 B.C. *January*.—Cæsar crosses to Epirus and confronts Pompeius at Durazzo. (Books V., VI.)

*August 9*.—Battle of Pharsalia. (Book VII.)

*September 29*.—Pompeius having fled to Egypt, is there murdered by one of the King's guards. (Book VIII.)

*October.*—Cæsar arrives in Egypt, and hostilities commence between him and the Egyptians. (Books IX., X.)

*November.*—Cato marches through the desert of Africa to Utica with the remnant of Pompeius' army. (Book IX.)

The poem, as is well known, ends abruptly, and is unfinished. To what point in the civil war Lucan proposed to carry it, must be a matter of conjecture only. It might have ended either with the murder of Cæsar, or, possibly, with the battle of Philippi; but there are also indications in the existing poem which point to the battle of Actium as the intended closing scene. This was the battle which left Octavius sole victor: and from some passages which need not be particularly mentioned, it might be inferred that the poet would not have been content until he had depicted the whole of the struggle which left Cæsar's house in possession of the Empire.

On the other hand, in the first book, Munda is called the *final* battle (line 47), by which must be meant the battle which terminated the conflict between the forces of Pompeius and Cæsar: and in a similar way, at line 769 of the same book, the murder of Cæsar is treated as the close of the war.

Pompeius is in a sense its hero. He was, to Lucan, the champion of liberty and the Senate: of that Senate which had conquered Italy and triumphed over Hannibal, and which to the poet represented the force whereby the old republican order might have been preserved, with its Consuls, its Tribunes, its suffrages, and all the institutions that to his mind were the tokens and fortresses of freedom. It escaped him that the power which had in the past achieved these triumphs failed, when the moment came, to define the wider boundaries required by the increased strength and population of the Roman dominion. Opposed to the Senate stood Cæsar, who despised the ancient forms and offices which were no longer the symbols of living force. In him Lucan saw only the upstart, who wished to cast aside the forms of law



because, and only because, they obstructed his path to empire. He did not see, and perhaps in his day it was not possible to see, that in Cæsar's time the old order of Rome had become powerless, and that in Cæsar only and in the party which he led was to be found a renewal of life such as could resist the vigour of the barbarian nations. Lucan was a patriot, and the baseness of the age in which he lived inflamed his imagination the more by its contrast with the historic liberties of his country. These were represented (as he thought) in the Senate and Consuls; and Pompeius, their general, was to that extent his hero.

And yet he knew the superiority of Cæsar. Even in the characters given in the First Book this appears. What can the mind that finds a dreamy enjoyment in the triumphs of the past, or in popular applause, avail against the impetuous, insatiable energy of its rival? We know before the struggle begins that Cæsar must be the conqueror. But throughout the poem Lucan appeals to his reader on behalf of Pompeius: when he leaves Italy for the last time; on the morning of the fatal battle; at its close; in the flight to Egypt, and at the last moment he calls for our sympathy for him. But while we grant it, our reason speaks for Cæsar. In a similar way Lucan frequently pictures Cæsar as a despoiler of Italian cities, nay, as the would-be despoiler of Rome herself; and he is not ashamed to put this accusation in the mouth of Pompeius (Book II. line 601). But the sentence quoted from Cicero at Book I. line 165, which describes the great general as moderate in victory, is in accordance with history. Nor had the brutality ascribed by the poet to Cæsar in his description of the battle of Pharsalia any foundation in fact.

It is in the speeches, which form the main feature of the poem, that we find the difference between the champions most strikingly accentuated. On these Lucan has expended



all his eloquence, all his pungency and epigrammatic power. Of one of them (the character of Pompeius spoken by Cato in Book IX.) Lord Macaulay said, 'It is a pure gem of rhetoric without one flaw,' and there are many others which nearly reach the same standard. Cæsar's speeches to his troops (Book I. 342, Book VII. 292) are, for example, full of conscious power. They are the words of a victorious general who claims victory as his right; who speaks to his soldiers as comrades, and demands of them the defence of their common country. Chivalrous to a Roman foe, he despises all else and calls upon his army to do the same. Pompeius' first speech, on the other hand (Book II. 597), is boastful and pretentious; and that in Book VII. 408, though in much better strain than the former one, fails to convince or persuade. When in Book VIII. he advocates an alliance with Parthia, the badness of his cause is not compensated by the logic with which he supports it.

Next in importance to the two opposing champions is Cato. Introduced to us in Book II. as the stern and rigid patriot, in Book IX. he embodies his principles in action. He is at once the unflinching commander, the philosopher who in peril and temptation loftily proclaims the tenets of his school, the inspired leader who some day shall receive divine honours, the captain who shares the lot of the meanest soldier, the statesman who upholds, amid disaster and defeat, the cause of public freedom.

The poem has, of course, all the blemishes that might be expected from the youth of its author. There are passages which offend against our sense of justice; we are asked to admire what is morally not admirable. There are many mistakes, specially in geography; there is obscurity, specially in astronomical matters; there are ghastly details of horrors, lengthy episodes not connected with the plot, and frequent exaggerations, as in the description of Scæva's exploits. There are also details of which the reader wearies, as in the

sea fight in Book III. But a spirited and patriotic apostrophe, or the vigorous eloquence of Cato or Caesar, or a powerful and dramatic description combine to give the poem force, and to maintain its power and interest; and impart to it a fascination under the glamour of which its faults are forgotten.

Very contrary opinions have been expressed as to the merits of the poem as a whole. Niebuhr ('Lectures on the History of Rome,' iii. 193) says, 'Lucan belongs to the time of Nero, and his poetry proceeded from the school of Seneca. His example shows us how much more intolerable its tendency is in poetry than in prose. Bernardin de St. Pierre and Chateaubriand are the offspring of a similar school. . . . It would be more bearable if it did not venture upon anything but sentimental moralising, as in the case of the former; but Chateaubriand is a perfect pendant to the bad poet Lucan. This is not yet generally recognised, indeed, but the opinion which now prevails in regard to his merits cannot continue.'

Here we have an unfair and incomplete criticism, and an unfulfilled prophecy. In spite of what Niebuhr says, the 'Pharsalia' has qualities which must always continue to excite the interest of mankind.

To turn to the opposite extreme, Shelley, in a letter dated September 1815, says, 'I have also read the four first books of Lucan's "Pharsalia," a poem, as it appears to me, of wonderful genius and transcending Virgil.'<sup>1</sup>

I should have supposed that no admirer of Lucan would care to rest his reputation on Books II., III., or IV., and it would be interesting to know whether Shelley retained the opinion he expressed in his letter.

Lord Macaulay (Trevelyan's 'Life and Letters,' i. 462) calls Lucan an excellent writer. I have already mentioned his opinion of the speech of Cato in Book IX. He also selected

<sup>1</sup> Forman's Edition, vol. vii. p. 348.

for special praise the dream of Pompey in Book VII., and the enumeration of his exploits in Book VIII. ‘When I consider,’ he says, ‘that Lucan died at twenty-six, I cannot help ranking him among the most extraordinary men that ever lived.’ But before the days of Macaulay, Dante gave a place to Lucan along with Homer, Horace, and Ovid, ‘four mighty spirits.’ Virgil appears as the fifth, and Dante adds :

Greater honour still

They gave me, for they made me of their tribe,  
And I was sixth among so learned a band.

‘Inferno,’ iv. 95 (Cary’s translation).

Probably the criticisms of Dean Merivale are founded on a more intimate knowledge of the ‘Pharsalia’ than are those of any other writer. The historian returned again and again to his favourite author, and constantly quoted him in illustration of his own subject. He points, however, to the want of imagination which, in his opinion, was one of Lucan’s characteristics, and says, with some justice, that he had not really pictured to himself the scene of the great battle which was the centrepiece of his poem ; he criticises truly the vague and uncertain philosophy of the poet, strongly stoical and yet undefined, and the frequent errors in his encyclopædic knowledge. One sentence may be quoted, in which he says : ‘His wit and cleverness, considering his years, are preternatural : the trumpet tones of his scorn or admiration, after more than thirty years’ familiarity, still thunder in my ears with startling intensity.’ For the rest I must content myself with referring to the close of the fifty-sixth and the opening of the sixty-fourth chapters of his ‘History of the Romans during the Empire.’

A few words are necessary with regard to the translation of this great poem which I have been bold enough to offer to the public. And, first, the great difficulty of the task makes me hope for an indulgent criticism. Mr. Heitland, indeed,

says in his introduction to the Cambridge edition, that a Dryden is required to give us in English an idea of the strength and vigour of the original poem. I am fully conscious of the truth of this, although I may be allowed to think that Ben Jonson's powerful blank verse might possibly have given us a more adequate rendering of the terse and pointed style of Lucan than even Dryden's heroics. But the fact remains that there is no good English version of the work.

Marlowe's translation of Book I. has dignity and force; but the movement is slow, and it wants dash. The Elizabethan poet seems to have thought it necessary to limit the number of his lines by those of the original; the result is that some of the ideas are not reproduced. Among many powerful lines there are weak ones, and he does not always rise to the level of the stronger passages. The famous line

*Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni,*

has not yet been well translated, and perhaps never will be; but when Marlowe wrote

Cæsar's cause

The gods abetted, Cato liked the other,

he was hardly equal either to Lucan or himself. I quote a short passage as a fair specimen of the whole:

So thunder, which the wind tears from the clouds,  
With crack of riven air and hideous sound,  
Filling the world, leaps out and throws forth fire,  
Affrights poor fearful men, and blasts their eyes  
With overthwarting flames, and raging shoots  
Alongst the air, and not resisting it  
Falls and returns and shivers where it lights.

Lines 151-157.

Thomas May's translation (published 1627) is in the heroic metre. It contains passages of some merit; but it is extremely unequal and is disfigured by diction frequently obscure, and by a fashion of rhyming which to modern



readers is uncouth and almost repulsive. He keeps, generally speaking, fairly close to the original, yet shrinks from some of the passages, particularly from those which are harder and more abstruse. I will give some short extracts illustrative of my meaning :

There fill'd with true light, with wond'ring eyes  
The wand'ring planets and first stars he sees.  
He sees our day involv'd in midst of night,  
And laughs at his torne trunk's ridiculous plight.

Book IX. line 12.

The ponderous earth out of her center tost,  
Her middle place in the world's orbe has lost ;  
So great a weight strooke by that voice was stirr'd  
And on both sides the face of heaven appeared.

Book IV. line 481.

But his version of Cato's speech at the oracle of Hammon, Book IX. lines 566-584 (660-685 in this translation), will probably find admirers, and is as follows :

What, Labienus, should I seeke to know ?  
If I had rather dye in armes, than bow  
Unto a Lord ? if life be nought at all ?  
No difference betwixt long life and small ?  
If any force can hurt men vertuous ?  
If fortune loose, when vertue doth oppose  
Her threats, if good desires be happinesse  
And vertue grow not greater by successe ?  
Thus much we know, nor deeper can the skill  
Of Ammon teach. The gods are with us still ;  
And though their oracles should silent be,  
Nought can we doe without the gods decree ;  
Nor needs he voices ; what was fit to know  
The great Creator at our births did show.  
Nor did he choose these barren sands to shew  
(Hiding it heere) his trueth but to a few.  
Is there a seate of God, save earth, and sea,  
Aire, heaven, and vertue ? Why for God should we  
Seeke further ? What ere moves, what ere is seene

Is Jove. For oracles let doubtfull men  
 Fearfull of future chances troubled be ;  
 Sure death, not oracles, ascertain me,  
 The coward and the valiant man must fall,  
 This is enough for Jove to speake to all.

Nicholas Rowe's translation is referred to in terms of praise by Pope, in a letter written by him to H. Cromwell (see the edition of Pope by Courthope and Elwin, vi. 110). But it has this defect, which must outbalance all the merits which it may possess as a poem, that it does not in style or manner reproduce the 'Pharsalia.'

In modern times we have had from Professor Goldwin Smith, in his 'Bay Leaves,' renderings of some chosen passages. But these give no idea of the poem. And the late Professor Froude published in his article entitled 'Divus Caesar' a blank-verse version of the apotheosis of Nero in Book I.

I have endeavoured to write a translation which shall reproduce the spirit of the original, and at the same time shall be fairly acceptable to English readers. Without pretending to have rendered every phrase precisely, I have striven to give the meaning of each passage. Other duties have prevented me from giving all the time to this object which would be required to satisfy the critical scholar who has made a study of the difficulties which abound in the 'Pharsalia;' but I have consulted the notes of Mr. Haskins in the Cambridge edition of 1887; the text of Hosius; and the text and notes of Francken on the first five books, published at Leyden early in the present year; and, where authorities differ, I hope that in each case some may be found to favour the rendering which has been adopted. I have not shrunk from translating directly extravagant epithets, similes, or descriptions; and I have, with few exceptions, followed the details without abbreviating the text. The particulars of the Marian

and Sullan massacres, however, have been to some extent shortened, and the catalogue in Book I. has been lightly passed over. But the description of the serpents in Book IX. has been rendered at full length. The speeches especially have been carefully studied, with a view of giving its full weight to each expression. They form, as has been said, one of the chief features in the poem.

With regard to proper names, I have in some instances, as in the Gallic catalogue, given the modern equivalent, but in most cases I have adhered to the ancient word; preferring Pompeius to Pompey, Ptolemæus to Ptolemy, Britannia to Britain, Athena or Athenæ to Athens. Similarly I have written Gaul or Gallia, and not France, though Marlowe spoke of the Rubicon as

Dividing just  
The bounds of Italy from Cisalpine France.  
Book I. line 218.<sup>1</sup>

But if he had written *Gaul* it would have been better. After all, it is the Roman who speaks. I hope I may at all events successfully contend that no precise or definite rule exists upon this subject; and that, within limits, a discretion is allowed to the translator.

There are some Latin words which I have not always translated, such as *Quirites*, *Imperator*, *rostra*, *fascēs*, *plebs*, the meaning of which no English word exactly conveys. But, despite the example of Lord Macaulay, *pilum* has been rendered as ‘spear.’

With reference to the notes, they are intended to assist, but do not aim at explaining everything.

I have, finally, to acknowledge the assistance of many friends: especially that of the Rev. Henry Furneaux, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; and of my old schoolfellow, W. J. Courthope, Esq., C.B., Professor of Poetry in the

<sup>1</sup> 248 of this translation.

University of Oxford, to whom I am deeply indebted for his most valuable and weighty aid and criticism.

I have to thank Miss Christabel Marshall, of 21 Great College Street, Westminster, for the preparation of the Index.

In conclusion, I shall be more than satisfied if I am found by this translation to have done anything to render the 'Pharsalia' in language, manner, and thought more accessible than it has hitherto been to English readers.

E. R.

*October 1896.*



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BOOK I

THE CROSSING OF THE RUBICON

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## BOOK I

### *THE CROSSING OF THE RUBICON*

WARS worse than civil on Emathian<sup>1</sup> plains,  
And crime let loose we sing : how Rome's high race  
Plunged in her vitals her victorious sword ;  
Armies akin embattled, with the force  
Of all the shaken earth bent on the fray ;  
And burst asunder, to the common guilt,  
A kingdom's compact ; eagle with eagle met,  
Standard to standard, spear opposed to spear.

Whence, citizens, this rage, this boundless lust  
To sate barbarians with the blood of Rome ? 10  
Did not the shade of Crassus, wandering still,<sup>2</sup>  
Cry for his vengeance ? Could ye not have spoiled,  
To deck your trophies, haughty Babylon ?  
Why wage campaigns that send no laurels home ?  
What lands, what oceans might have been the prize  
Of all the blood thus shed in civil strife !  
Where Titan rises, where night hides the stars,  
'Neath southern noons with fiery rays aflame,  
Or where keen frost that never yields to spring  
In icy fetters binds the Scythian main : 20  
Long since barbarian Araxes' stream,

<sup>1</sup> 'The great Emathian conqueror' (Milton's sonnet). Emathia was a part of Macedonia, but the word is used loosely for Thessaly or Macedonia.

<sup>2</sup> Crassus had been defeated and slain by the Parthians in B.C. 53, four years before this period.

And all the distant East, and those who know  
 (If any such there be) the birth of Nile,  
 Had felt our yoke. Then, then, with all the world  
 Beneath thee, Rome, if for nefarious war  
 Such be thy passion, turn upon thyself:  
 Not yet was wanting for thy sword a foe.

That crumbled houses and half-ruined homes  
 Now mark our cities; that the ancient streets  
 Scarce hear the footfall of the passer-by;  
 That mighty fragments lie beside the walls;  
 That hearths are desolate; that far and wide  
 Fields thick with bramble and untilled for years  
 Demand the labours of the hind in vain:  
 All this nor Pyrrhus caused, nor Punic chief,  
 Nor sword thrust deep. 'Twas civil strife alone  
 That dealt the wound and left the death behind.

30

<sup>1</sup> Yet if the fates could find no other way  
 For Nero's coming, nor the gods with ease  
 Gain thrones in heaven; and if the Thunderer  
 Prevailed not till the giants' war was done,  
 We plain no more, ye gods! for such a boon  
 All wickedness be welcome and all crime;  
 Thronged with our dead be dire Pharsalia's fields,  
 Be Punic ghosts avenged by Roman blood;

40

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Froude in his essay entitled 'Divus Cæsar' hints that these famous lines may have been written in mockery. Probably the five years known as the Golden Era of Nero had passed when they were written: yet the text itself does not aid such a suggestion; and the view generally taken, namely that Lucan was in earnest, appears preferable. There were many who dreamed at the time that the disasters of the Civil War were being compensated by the wealth and prosperity of the empire under Nero; and the assurance of universal peace, then almost realised, which is expressed in lines 69-71, seems inconsistent with the idea that this passage was written in irony. Lecky ('European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne,' vol. i. p. 240) describes these latter verses as written 'with all the fervour of a Christian poet.' See also Merivale's 'Roman Empire,' chapter liv.

Add, Cæsar, to these ills the Mutin toils ;  
Perusia's dearth ; on Munda's final field  
The shock of battle joined ; let Leucas' Cape  
Shatter the routed navies ; servile hands  
Unsheathe the sword on fiery Etna's slopes : 50  
Still Rome is gainer by the civil war. ✓  
Thou, Cæsar, art her prize. When thou shalt choose,  
Thy watch relieved, to seek at length the stars,  
All heaven rejoicing ; and shalt hold a throne,  
Or else elect to govern Phœbus' car  
And light a subject world that shall not dread  
To owe her brightness to a different Sun ;  
All shall concede thy right : do what thou wilt,  
Select thy Godhead, and the central clime  
Whence thou shalt rule the world with power divine, 60  
And yet the Northern or the Southern Pole  
We pray thee, choose not ; but in rays direct  
Vouchsafe thy radiance to thy city Rome.  
Press thou on either side, the universe  
Should lose its equipoise : take thou the midst,  
And weight the scales, and let that part of heaven  
Where Cæsar sits be evermore serene  
And smile upon us with unclouded blue.  
Then may all men lay down their arms, and peace  
Through all the nations reign, and shut the gates 70  
That close the temple of the God of War.  
Be thou my help, to me e'en now divine !  
Let Delphi's steep her own Apollo guard,  
And Nysa keep her Bacchus, uninvoked.  
Rome is my subject and my muse art thou !

First of such deeds I purpose to unfold  
The causes—task immense—what drove to arms  
A maddened nation and from all the world  
Struck peace away.



## By envious fate's decrees

Abide not long the mightiest lords of earth ; 80  
Too great the burden, great shall be the fall.  
Thus Rome o'ergrew her strength. So when that hour,  
'The last in all the centuries, shall sound  
'The world's disruption, all things shall revert  
To that primæval chaos, stars on stars  
Shall crash ; and fiery meteors from the sky  
Plunge in the ocean. Earth shall then no more  
Front with her bulwark the encroaching sea :  
'The moon, indignant at her path oblique,  
Shall drive her chariot 'gainst her brother Sun 90  
And claim the day for hers ; and discord huge  
Shall rend the spheres asunder. On themselves  
The great are dashed : such end the gods have set  
To height of power : nor ever Fortune shares  
With other lands the weapons of her spite  
Against a nation lord of land and sea.  
Thou, Rome, degraded, sold, the common prey  
Of triple despots, of a tyrant rule  
Partnered as ne'er before—thyself art cause  
Of all the ills. Ye chiefs, with greed of power 100  
Blind, leagued for evil, is your force conjoined  
To hold the world in common as your prize ?  
So long as Sea on Earth and Earth on Air  
Lean for support : while Titan runs his course,  
And night with day divides an equal sphere,  
No king shall brook his fellow, nor shall rule  
Endure a rival. Search no foreign lands :  
'These walls are proof that in their infant days  
A hamlet, not the world, was prize enough  
To cause the shedding of a brother's blood. 110

Concord, on discord based, brief time endured,  
Unwelcome to the rivals ; and alone

Crassus delayed the advent of the war.

Like to the slender neck that separates

The seas of Græcia : should it be engulfed

<sup>1</sup> Then would th' Ionian and Ægean mains

Break each on other : thus when Crassus fell,

Who held apart the chiefs, in piteous death,

And stained Assyria's plains with Latian blood,

Defeat in Parthia loosed the war in Rome.

120

More in that victory than ye thought was won,

Ye sons of Arsaces ; your conquered foes

Took at your hands the rage of civil strife.

By sword the realm is parted ; and the state

Supreme o'er earth and sea, wide as the world,

Could not find space for two.<sup>2</sup> For Julia bore,

Cut off by fate unpitying,<sup>3</sup> the bond

Of that ill-omened marriage, and the pledge

Of blood united, to the shades below.

Hadst thou but longer stayed, it had been thine

130

To keep the parent and the spouse apart,

Strike sword from grasp and join the threatening hands ;

As Sabine matrons in the days of old

Joined in the midst the bridegroom and the sire.

With thee all trust was buried, and the chiefs

Could give their courage vent, and rushed to war.

<sup>1</sup> See a similar passage in the final scene of Ben Jonson's 'Catiline.' The cutting of the Isthmus of Corinth was proposed in Nero's reign, and actually commenced in his presence ; but abandoned because it was asserted that the level of the water in the Corinthian Gulf was higher than that in the Saronic Gulf, so that, if the canal were cut, the island of Ægina would be submerged. Merivale's 'Roman Empire,' chapter lv.

<sup>2</sup> Compare :

'Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere  
Nor can one England brook a double reign  
Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales.'

'1 Henry IV.,' Act v., Scene 4.

<sup>3</sup> This had taken place in B.C. 54, about five years before the action of the poem opens.

Lest newer glories triumphs past obscure,  
 Late conquered Gaul the bays from pirates won,  
 This, Magnus, is thy fear ; thy roll of fame,  
 Of glorious deeds accomplished for the state 140  
 Allows no equal ; nor will Cæsar's pride  
 A prior rival in his triumphs brook ;  
 Which had the right 'twere impious to enquire ;  
 Each for his cause can vouch a judge supreme ;  
 The victor, heaven : the vanquished, Cato, thee.<sup>1</sup>  
 Nor were they like to like : the one in years  
 Now verging towards decay, in times of peace  
 Had unlearned war ; but thirsting for applause  
 Gave to the people much, and proud of fame  
 His former glory cared not to renew, 150  
 But joyed in plaudits of the theatre,<sup>2</sup>  
 His gift to Rome : his triumphs in the past,  
 Himself the shadow of a mighty name.  
 As when some oak, in fruitful field sublime,<sup>3</sup>  
 Adorned with venerable spoils, and gifts  
 Of bygone leaders, by its weight to earth

<sup>1</sup> This famous line was quoted by Lamartine when addressing the French Assembly in 1848. He was advocating, against the interests of his own party (which in the Assembly was all-powerful), that the President of the Republic should be chosen by the nation, and not by the Assembly; and he ended by saying that if the course he advocated was disastrous to himself, '*Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*'

<sup>2</sup> '*Plausuque sui gaudere theatri.*' Quoted by Mr. Pitt, in his speech on the address in 1783, on the occasion of peace being made with France, Spain, and America; in allusion to Mr. Sheridan. The latter replied, 'If ever I again engage in the compositions he alludes to, I may be tempted to an act of presumption—to attempt an improvement on one of Ben Jonson's best characters—the character of the Angry Boy in the "*Alchymist*."'

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Canning, in his speech on the vote for the Windsor Establishment, said of King George III., 'Scathed by Heaven's lightning, but consecrated as much as blasted by the blow, he yet exhibited to the awe and veneration of mankind a mighty monument of strength and majesty in decay. He stood like the oak of the poet stripped of that luxuriant foliage and spreading those denuded arms which had afforded shelter to successive generations: *et trunco non frondibus efficit umbram.*'

With feeble roots still clings ; its naked arms  
And hollow trunk, though leafless, give a shade ;  
And though condemned beneath the tempest's shock  
To speedy fall, amid the sturdier trees 160  
In sacred grandeur rules the forest still.

No such repute had Cæsar won, nor fame ;  
But energy was his that could not rest—  
The only shame he knew was not to win.  
Keen and unvanquished,<sup>1</sup> where revenge or hope  
Might call, resistless would he strike the blow  
With sword unpitying : every victory won  
Reaped to the full ; the favour of the gods  
Pressed to the utmost ; all that stayed his course  
Aimed at the summit of power, was thrust aside : 170  
Triumph his joy, though ruin marked his track.  
As parts the clouds a bolt by winds compelled,  
With crack of riven air and crash of worlds,  
And veils the light of day, and on mankind,  
Blasting their vision with its flames oblique,  
Sheds deadly fright ; then turning to its home,  
Nought but the air opposing, through its path  
Spreads havoc, and collects its scattered fires.

Such were the hidden motives of the chiefs ;  
But in the public life the seeds of war 180  
Their hold had taken, such as are the doom  
Of potent nations : and when fortune poured  
Through Roman gates the booty of a world,  
The curse of luxury, chief bane of states,  
Fell on her sons. Farewell the ancient ways !  
Behold the pomp profuse, the houses decked  
With ornament ; their hunger loathed the food

<sup>1</sup> Cicero wrote thus of Cæsar : ' Have you ever read or heard of a man more vigorous in action or *more moderate in the use of victory* than our Cæsar ? '—' Epp. ad Diversos,' viii. 15.

Of former days ; men wore attire for dames  
 Scarce fitly fashioned ; poverty was scorned,  
 Fruitful of warriors ; and from all the world 190  
 Came that which ruins nations ; while the fields  
 Furrowed of yore by great Camillus' plough,  
 Or by the mattock which a Curius held,  
 Lost their once narrow bounds, and widening tracts  
 By hinds unknown were tilled. No nation this  
 To sheathe the sword, with tranquil peace content  
 And with her liberties ; but prone to ire ;  
 Crime holding light as though by want compelled :  
 Great was the glory in the minds of men,  
 Ambition lawful even at point of sword, 200  
 To rise above their country : might their law :  
 Decrees were forced from Senate and from Plebs :  
 Consul and Tribune broke the laws alike :  
 Bought were the fasces, and the people sold  
 For gain their favour : bribery's fatal curse  
 Stained every yearly contest of the Field.  
 Then covetous usury rose, and interest  
 Was greedier with the seasons ; and all trust  
 Was crushed ; and many found a boon in war.  
 Cæsar has crossed the Alps, his mighty soul 210  
 Great tumults pondering and the coming shock.  
 Now on the marge of Rubicon, he saw,  
 In face most sorrowful and ghostly guise,  
 His trembling country's image ; huge it seemed  
 Through mists of night obscure ; and hoary hair  
 Streamed from the lofty front with turrets crowned :  
 Torn were her locks and naked were her arms.  
 Then thus, with broken sighs the Vision spake :  
 ' What seek ye, men of Rome ? and whither hence  
 ' Bear ye my standards ? If by right ye come, 220  
 ' My citizens, stay here ; these are the bounds ;



‘ No further dare.’ But Cæsar’s hair was stiff  
With horror as he gazed, and ghastly dread  
Restrained his footsteps on the further bank.  
Then spake he, ‘ Thunderer, who from the rock  
‘ Tarpeian seest the wall of mighty Rome ;  
‘ Gods of my race who watched o’er Troy of old ;  
‘ Thou Jove of Alba’s height, and Vestal fires,  
‘ And rites of Romulus erst rapt to heaven,  
‘ And God-like Rome ; be friendly to my quest. 230  
‘ Not with offence or hostile arms I come,  
‘ Thy Cæsar, conqueror by land and sea,  
‘ Thy soldier here and wheresoe’er thou wilt :  
‘ No other’s ; his, his only be the guilt  
‘ Whose acts make me thy foe.’ He gives the word  
And bids his standards cross the swollen stream.

So in the wastes of Afric’s burning clime  
The lion crouches as his foes draw near,  
Feeding his wrath the while, his lashing tail  
Provokes his fury ; stiff upon his neck 240  
Bristles his mane : deep from his gaping jaws  
Resounds the muttered growl, and should a lance  
Or javelin reach him from the hunter’s ring,  
Scorning the puny scratch he bounds afield.

From modest fountain blood-red Rubicon  
In summer’s heat flows on ; his pigmy tide  
Creeps through the valleys and with slender marge  
Divides the Italian peasant from the Gaul.  
Then winter gave him strength, and fraught with rain  
The third day’s crescent moon ; while Eastern winds 250  
Thawed from the Alpine slopes the yielding snow.  
The cavalry first form across the stream  
To break the torrent’s force ; the rest with ease  
Beneath their shelter gain the further bank.  
When Cæsar crossed and trod beneath his feet

The soil of Italy's forbidden fields,  
 ' Here,' spake he, ' peace, here broken laws be left ;  
 ' Farewell to treaties. Fortune, lead me on ;  
 ' War is our judge, and in the fates our trust.'  
 Then in the shades of night he leads the troops 260  
 Swifter than Balearic sling or shaft  
 Winged by retreating Parthian, to the walls  
 Of threatened Rimini, while fled the stars,  
 Save Lucifer, before the coming sun,  
 Whose fires were veiled in clouds, by south wind driven,  
 Or else at heaven's command : and thus drew on  
 The first dark morning of the civil war.

Now stood the troops within the captured town,  
 Their standards planted ; and the trumpet clang  
 Rang forth in harsh alarums, giving note 270  
 Of impious strife : roused from their sleep the men  
 Rushed to the hall and snatched the ancient arms  
 Long hanging through the years of peace ; the shield  
 With crumbling frame ; dark with the tooth of rust  
 Their swords ;<sup>1</sup> and javelins with blunted point.  
 But when the well-known signs and eagles shone,  
 And Cæsar towering o'er the throng was seen,  
 They shook for terror, fear possessed their limbs,  
 And thoughts unuttered stirred within their souls.  
 ' O miserable those to whom their home 280  
 ' Denies the peace that all men else enjoy !  
 ' Placed as we are beside the Northern bounds  
 ' And scarce a footstep from the restless Gaul,  
 ' We fall the first ; would that our lot had been  
 ' Beneath the Eastern sky, or frozen North,  
 ' To lead a wandering life, rather than keep

<sup>1</sup> Marlowe has it :

' . . . And swords  
 With ugly teeth of black rust foully scarred.'



- ‘ The gates of Latium. Brennus sacked the town  
‘ And Hannibal, and all the Teuton hosts.  
‘ This is the path when Rome’s the prize of war.’  
Deep in their breasts they breathed the silent moan ; 290  
But dared not speak their sorrow nor their fear.  
As when in winter all the fields are still,  
And birds are voiceless, and no murmured sound  
Breaks on the silence of the central sea ;  
So deep the stillness. But when through the shades  
The day had broken, lo ! the torch of war !  
For by the hand of Fate is swift dispersed  
All Cæsar’s shame of battle, and his mind  
Scarce doubted more ; and Fortune toiled to make  
His action just and give him cause for arms. 300  
For while Rome wavered and her patriots’ names  
Were loud and frequent in the mouths of men,  
The Senate angered and in scorn of right <sup>1</sup>  
Drove out the Tribunes who withstood their will.  
To Cæsar’s troops already on the march  
They haste with Curio, who in former days  
With bold and venal tongue had dared to speak  
For Freedom, and to voice the people’s wrongs,  
And summon to their side the chiefs in arms.  
Who, when he saw that Cæsar doubted still, 310  
Spake out ; ‘ So long as I the rostrum held  
‘ By this my voice against the Senate’s will  
‘ Was thy command prolonged, and to thy side  
‘ By me were drawn the wavering men of Rome.  
‘ Mute now are laws in war ; we from our hearths

<sup>1</sup> In the Senate, Curio had proposed and carried a resolution that Pompeius and Cæsar should lay their arms down simultaneously : but this was resisted by the Oligarchal party, who endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to expel Curio from the Senate, and who placed Pompeius in command of the legions at Capua. This was in effect a declaration of war ; and Curio, after a last attempt at resistance, left the city, and betook himself to Cæsar. (See the close of Book IV.)

' Are driven, yet willing exiles ; for thine arms

' Shall make us citizens of Rome again.

<sup>1</sup> ' Strike ; for no strength as yet the foe hath gained.

' To pause when ready is to court defeat :

' Like risk, like labour, thou hast known before, 320

' But never such reward. Could Gallia hold

' Thine armies ten long years ere victory came,

' That little nook of earth ? One paltry fight

' Or twain, fought out by thy resistless hand,

' And Rome for thee shall have subdued the world :

' 'Tis true no triumph now would bring thee home ;

' No captive tribes would grace thy chariot wheels

' Winding in pomp around the ancient hill :

' Spite, gnawing spite, denies thee all thy due ;

' For all thy conquests, for a world well won 330

' Scarce shalt thou go unpunished. Yet 'tis fate

' Thou should'st subdue thy kinsman : share the world

' With him thou canst not ; rule thou canst, alone.'

As when at Elis' festival a horse

In stable pent gnaws at his prison bars

Impatient, and should clamour from without

Strike on his ear, bounds furious at restraint,

So then was Cæsar, eager for the fight,

Stirred by the words of Curio. To the ranks

He bids his soldiers ; with majestic mien 340

And hand commanding silence as they come.

' Comrades,' he cried, ' victorious returned,

' Who by my side for ten long years have faced,

' Mid Alpine winters and on Arctic shores,

' The thousand dangers of the battle-field——

' Is this our country's welcome, this her prize

<sup>1</sup> ' Strike.' Dante places Curio in the ninth gulf of hell, 'from whose throat was cut the tongue which spake that hardy word.'—'Inferno,' xxviii. 98 (Cary).

- ' For death and wounds and Roman blood outpoured ?  
 ' Rome arms her choicest sons ; the sturdy oaks  
 ' Are felled to make a fleet ;—what could she more  
 ' If from the Alps fierce Hannibal were come 350  
 ' With all his Punic host ? “ By land and sea  
 ' Cæsar shall fly ! ” Fly ? Though in adverse war  
 ' Our best had fallen, and the savage Gaul  
 ' Were hard upon our track, we would not fly.  
 ' And now, when fortune smiles and kindly gods  
 ' Beckon us on to glory !—Let him come  
 ' Fresh from his years of peace, with all his crowd  
 ' Of conscript burgesses, Marcellus' tongue <sup>1</sup>  
 ' And Cato's empty name ! We will not fly.  
 ' Shall Eastern hordes and greedy hirelings keep 360  
 ' Their loved Pompeius ever at the helm ?  
 ' Shall chariots of triumph be for him  
 ' Though youth and law forbad them ? Shall he seize  
 ' On Rome's chief honours ne'er to be resigned ?  
 ' And what of harvests <sup>2</sup> blighted through the world  
 ' And ghastly famine made to serve his ends ?  
 ' Who hath forgotten how Pompeius' bands  
 ' Seized on the forum ? the grim sheen of swords  
 ' When outraged justice trembled, and the spears  
 ' Hemmed in the judgment-seat where Milo <sup>3</sup> stood ? 370  
 ' And now when worn and old and ripe for rest, <sup>4</sup>  
 ' Greedy of power, the impious sword again

<sup>1</sup> Marcus Marcellus, consul in B.C. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, 'Pomp.,' 49. The harbours and places of trade were placed under his control in order that he might find a remedy for the scarcity of grain. But his enemies said that he had caused the scarcity in order to get the power.

<sup>3</sup> Milo was brought to trial for the murder of Clodius in B.C. 52, about three years before this. Pompeius, then sole Consul, had surrounded the tribunal with soldiers, who at one time charged the crowd. Milo was sent into exile at Massilia.

<sup>4</sup> See Book II., 631.

He draws. As tigers in Hyrcanian woods  
‘ Wandering, or in the caves that saw their birth,  
‘ Once having lapped the blood of slaughtered kine,  
‘ Shall never cease from rage ; e’en so this whelp  
‘ Of cruel Sulla, nursed in civil war,  
‘ Outstrips his master ; and the tongue which licked  
‘ That reeking weapon ever thirsts for more.  
‘ Stain once the lips with blood, no other meal 330  
‘ They shall enjoy. And shall there be no end  
‘ Of these long years of power and of crime ?  
‘ Nay, this one lesson, ere it be too late,  
‘ Learn of thy gentle Sulla—to retire !  
‘ Of old his victory o’er Cilician thieves  
‘ And Pontus’ weary monarch gave him fame,  
‘ By poison scarce attained. His latest prize  
‘ Shall I be, Cæsar, I, who would not quit  
‘ My conquering eagles at his proud command ?  
‘ Nay, if no triumph is reserved for me, 390  
‘ Let these at least of long and toilsome war  
‘ Neath other leaders the rewards enjoy.  
‘ Where shall the weary soldier find his rest ?  
‘ What cottage homes their joys, what fields their fruit  
‘ Shall to our veterans yield ? Will Magnus say  
‘ That pirates only till the fields aright ?  
‘ Unfurl your standards ; victory gilds them yet,  
‘ As through those glorious years. Deny our rights !  
‘ He that denies them makes our quarrel just.  
‘ Nay ! use the strength that we have made our own. 400  
‘ No booty seek we, nor imperial power.  
‘ This would-be ruler of subservient Rome  
‘ We force to quit his grasp ; and Heaven shall smile  
‘ On those who seek to drag the tyrant down.’

Thus Cæsar spake ; but doubtful murmurs ran  
Throughout the crowd ; their household gods and homes

Made pause their minds though long inured to blood :  
But fear of Cæsar and the pride of war  
Drew them to him. Then Lælius, who wore  
The well-earned crown for Roman life preserved, 410  
The foremost Captain of the army, spake :  
' O greatest leader of the Roman name,  
' If thou dost ask it, and the law permits,  
' I tell thee all : our just complaint is this,  
' That gifted with such strength thou didst refrain  
' From using it. Hadst thou no trust in us ?  
' While the hot life-blood fills these glowing veins,  
' While these strong arms avail to hurl the lance,  
' Wilt thou in peace endure the Senate's rule ?  
' Is civil conquest then so base and vile ? 420  
' Lead us through Scythian deserts, lead us where  
' The inhospitable Syrtes line the shore  
' Of Afric's burning sands, or where thou wilt :  
' This hand, to leave a conquered world behind,  
' Held firm the oar that tamed the Northern Sea  
' And Rhine's swift torrent foaming to the main.  
' To follow thee fate gives me now the power :  
' The will was mine before. No citizen  
' I count the man 'gainst whom thy trumpets sound.  
' By ten campaigns of victory, I swear, 430  
' By all thy triumphs, bid me plunge the sword  
' In sire or brother or in pregnant spouse,  
' By this unwilling hand the deed were done :  
' Bid spoil the gods and set the fanes ablaze,  
' Great Juno's shrine were kindled with our fires ;  
' Bid plant our arms o'er Tuscan Tiber's stream,  
' Italian land I'll quarter for the camp :  
' Bid raze the wall, I'll drive the fatal ram  
' And rive the stones asunder, though the prize



‘Were Rome herself.’ His comrades lift their hands 440  
And vow to follow wheresoe’er he leads.

And such a clamour rends the sky as when  
Some Thracian blast on Ossa’s pine-clad rocks  
Falls headlong, and the loud re-echoing woods,  
Or bending, or rebounding from the stroke,  
In sounding chorus lift the roar on high.

When Cæsar saw them welcome thus the war  
And Fortune leading on, and favouring fates,  
He seized the moment, called his troops from Gaul,  
And breaking up his camp set on for Rome. 450

The tents are vacant by Lake Lemán’s side ;  
The camps upon the beetling crags of Vosges  
No longer hold the warlike Lingon down,  
Fierce in his painted arms ; Isère is left,  
Who past his shallows gliding, flows at last  
Into the current of more famous Rhone,  
To reach the ocean in another name.  
The fair-haired people of Cevennes are free :  
Soft Aude rejoicing bears no Roman keel,  
Nor pleasant Var, since then Italia’s bound ; 460  
The harbour sacred to Alcides’ name  
Where hollow crags encroach upon the sea,  
Is left in freedom : there nor Zephyr gains  
Nor <sup>1</sup> Caurus access, but the Circian blast  
Forbids the roadstead by Monæcus’ hold.  
Left is the doubtful shore, which the vast sea  
And land alternate claim, whene’er the tide  
Pours in amain or when the wave rolls back—  
Be it the wind which thus compels the deep  
From furthest pole, and leaves it at the flood ; 470  
Or else the moon that makes the tide to swell,

<sup>1</sup> The north-west wind. Circius was a violent wind from about the same quarter, but peculiar to the district.

Or else, in search of fuel<sup>1</sup> for his fires,  
 The sun draws heavenward the ocean wave ;—  
 Whate'er the cause that may control the main  
 I leave to others ; let the gods for me  
 Lock in their breasts the secrets of the world.

Those who keep watch beside the western shore  
 Have moved their standards home ; the happy Gaul  
 Rejoices in their absence ; fair Garonne  
 Through peaceful meads glides onward to the sea. 480  
 And where the river broadens, neath the cape  
 Her quiet harbour sleeps. No outstretched arm  
 Except in mimic war now hurls the lance.  
 No skilful warrior of Seine directs  
 The chariot scythed against his country's foe.  
 Now rest the Belgians, and th' Arvernian race  
 That boasts our kinship by descent from Troy ;  
 And those brave rebels whose undaunted hands  
 Were dipped in Cotta's blood, and those who wear  
 Sarmatian garb. Batavia's warriors fierce 490  
 No longer listen for the trumpet's call,  
 Nor those who dwell where Rhone's swift eddies sweep  
 Saone to the ocean ; nor the mountain tribes  
 Who dwell about its source. Thou, too, oh Treves, —  
 Rejoicest that the war has left thy bounds.  
 Ligurian tribes, now shorn, in ancient days  
 First of the long-haired nations, on whose necks  
 Once flowed the auburn locks in pride supreme ;  
 And those who pacify with blood accursed  
 Savage Teutates, Hesus' horrid shrines, 500  
 And Taranis' altars, cruel as were those  
 Loved by Diana,<sup>2</sup> goddess of the north ;

<sup>1</sup> This idea that the sun found fuel in the clouds appears again in Book VII., line 7 ; Book IX., line 375 ; and Book X., line 311.

<sup>2</sup> This Diana was worshipped by the Tauri, a people who dwelt in the Crimea ; and, according to legend, was propitiated by human sacrifices.



All these now rest in peace. And you, ye Bards,  
 Whose martial lays send down to distant times  
 The fame of valorous deeds in battle done,  
 Pour forth in safety more abundant song.  
 While you, ye Druids,<sup>1</sup> when the war was done,  
 To mysteries strange and hateful rites returned :  
 To you alone 'tis given the heavenly gods  
 To know or not to know ; secluded groves 510  
 Your dwelling-place, and forests far remote.  
 If what ye sing be true, the shades of men  
 Seek not the dismal homes of Erebus  
 Or death's pale kingdoms ; but the breath of life  
 Still rules these bodies in another age—  
 Life on this hand and that, and death between.  
 Happy the peoples 'neath the Northern Star  
 In this their false belief ; for them no fear  
 Of that which frights all others : they with hands  
 And hearts undaunted rush upon the foe 520  
 And scorn to spare the life that shall return.  
 Ye too depart who kept the banks of Rhine  
 Safe from the foe, and leave the Teuton tribes  
 Free at their will to march upon the world.

When strength increased gave hope of greater deeds  
 Cæsar dispersed throughout Italia's bounds

Orestes on his return from his expiatory wanderings brought her image to Greece, and the Greeks identified her with their Artemis. (Compare Book VI., 93.)

<sup>1</sup> The horror of the Druidical groves is again alluded to in Book III., lines 460-490. Dean Merivale remarks (chapter li.) on this passage, that in the despair of another life which pervaded Paganism at the time, the Roman was exasperated at the Druids' assertion of the transmigration of souls. But the passage seems also to betray a lingering suspicion that the doctrine may in some shape be true, however horrible were the rites and sacrifices. The reality of a future life was a part of Lucan's belief, as a state of reward for heroes. (See the passage at the beginning of Book IX.) But all was vague and uncertain, and he appears to have viewed the Druidical transmigration rather with doubt and unbelief, as a possible form of future or recurring life, than with scorn as an absurdity.

His countless bands, and filled the neighbouring towns.  
 Then empty rumour to well-grounded fear  
 Gave strength, and heralding the coming war  
 In hundred voices 'midst the people spread. 530  
 One cries in terror, 'Swift the squadrons come  
 'Where Nar with Tiber joins: and where, in meads  
 'By oxen loved, Mevania spreads her walls,  
 'Fierce Cæsar hurries his barbarian horse.  
 'With all his eagles and his standards joined  
 'He leads the throng that sweeps along the land.'  
 Nor as they knew him do they paint the chief,  
 But stronger than the truth, and pitiless  
 And fiercer far—as from his conquered foes  
 Advancing; in his rear the peoples march, 540  
 Snatched from their homes between the Rhine and Alps,  
 To sack the city while her sons look on.  
 Thus each man's panic thought swells rumour's lie:  
 They fear the phantoms they themselves create.  
 Nor did the terror seize the crowd alone:  
 But fled the Fathers, to the Consuls<sup>1</sup> first  
 Issuing their hated order, as for war;  
 And doubting of the peril, doubting too  
 Where safety lay, through all the choking gates  
 In dense array they urged the people forth. 550  
 Thou wouldst believe that blazing to the torch  
 Were men's abodes, or nodding to their fall.  
 So streamed they onwards, frenzied with affright,  
 As though in exile only could they find  
 Hope for their country. So, when southern blasts  
 From Libyan whirlpools drive the boundless main,  
 And mast and sail crash down upon a ship  
 With ponderous weight, but still the frame is sound,

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch says the Consuls fled without making the sacrifices usual before wars. ('Pomp.' 61.)

Her crew and captain leap into the sea,  
 Each making shipwreck for himself. 'Twas thus 560  
 They passed the city gates and fled to war.  
 No aged parent now could stay his son ;  
 Nor wife her spouse, nor did they pray the gods  
 To grant the safety of their fatherland.  
 None linger on the threshold for a look  
 Of their loved city, though perchance the last.

Ye gods, who lavish priceless gifts on men,  
 Nor care to guard them given ! thus was Rome  
 Teeming with conquered nations, whose vast walls  
 Had compassed all mankind, by coward hands 570  
 To coming Cæsar left an easy prey.  
 The Roman soldier, when in foreign lands  
 Pressed by the enemy, in narrow trench  
 And hurried mound finds guard enough to make  
 His tented sleep secure : thou Rome alone  
 Upon the rumour of advancing war  
 Art left a desert, and thy battlements  
 Not trusted for a night. Yet for their fear  
 This one excuse was left ; Pompeius fled.  
 Nor found they room for hope ; for nature gave 580  
 Unerring portents of worse ills to come.  
 The angry gods filled earth and air and sea  
 With frequent prodigies ; in darkest nights  
 Strange constellations sparkled through the gloom :  
 The pole was all afire, and torches flew  
 Across the depths of heaven ; with horrid hair  
 A blazing comet stretched from east to west  
 And threatened change to kingdoms. From the blue  
 Pale lightning flashed, and in the murky air  
 The fire took divers shapes ; a lance afar *here* 590  
 Would seem to quiver or a misty torch ;  
 A noiseless thunderbolt from cloudless sky

Rushed down, and drawing fire in northern parts  
 Plunged on the summit of the Alban mount.  
 The stars that run their courses in the void  
 Of night, came forth at noontide, and the moon  
 Whose orb complete gave back her brother's rays,  
 Hid by the shade of earth, grew pale and wan.

The sun himself, when poised in mid career,  
 Shrouded his burning car in blackest gloom 600  
 And plunged the world in darkness, so that men  
 Despaired of day—like as he veiled his light

<sup>1</sup> From that fell banquet which Mycenæ saw.  
 The jaws of Etna were agape with flame  
 That rose not heavenwards, but headlong fell  
 In smoking stream upon th' Italian flank.  
 Then black Charybdis, from her boundless depth,  
 Threw up a gory sea. In piteous tones  
 Howled the wild dogs; the Vestal fire was snatched  
 From off the altar; and the flame that crowned 610  
 The Latin festival was split in twain,

As on the Theban pyre,<sup>2</sup> in ancient days;  
 Earth tottered on its base: the mighty Alps  
 From off their summits shook th' eternal snow.<sup>3</sup>

In huge upheaval Ocean raised his waves

O'er Calpe's rock and Atlas' hoary head.

The native gods shed tears, and holy sweat

Dropped from the idols; gifts in temples fell:

Foul birds defiled the day; beasts left the woods

<sup>1</sup> Compare Ben Jonson's 'Catiline,' I. 1:—

*Lecca.* The day goes back,  
 Or else my senses.

*Curius.* As at Atreus' feast.

<sup>2</sup> When the Theban brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, were being burned on the same pyre, the flame shot up in two separate tongues, indicating that even in death they could not be reconciled. (Mr. Haskins' note, citing Statius, 'Theb.')

<sup>3</sup> 'Shook the old snow from off their trembling laps.' (Marlowe.)

The Latin word is *jugis*.

And made their lair among the streets of Rome. 620  
 All this we hear ; nay more : dumb oxen spake ;  
 Monsters were brought to birth and mothers shrieked  
 At their own offspring ; words of dire import  
 From Cumæ's prophetess were noised abroad.  
 Bellona's priests with bleeding arms, and slaves  
 Of Cybele's worship, with ensanguined hair,  
 Howled chants of havoc and of woe to men.  
 Arms clashed ; and sounding in the pathless woods  
 Were heard strange voices ; spirits walked the earth :  
 And dead men's ashes muttered from the urn. 630  
 Those who live near the walls desert their homes,  
 For lo ! with hissing serpents in her hair,  
 Waving in downward whirl a blazing pine,  
 A fiend patrols the town, like that which erst  
 At Thebes urged on Agavé,<sup>1</sup> or which hurled  
 Lycurgus' bolts, or that which as he came  
 From Hades seen, at haughty Juno's word,  
 Brought terror to the soul of Hercules.  
 Trumpets like those that summon armies forth  
 Were heard re-echoing in the silent night : 640  
 And from the earth arising Sulla's<sup>2</sup> ghost  
 Sang gloomy oracles, and by Anio's wave  
 All fled the homesteads, frightened by the shade  
 Of Marius waking from his broken tomb.

In such dismay they summon, as of yore,  
 The Tuscan sages to the nation's aid.  
 Aruns, the eldest, leaving his abode  
 In desolate Luca,<sup>3</sup> came, well versed in all  
 The lore of omens ; knowing what may mean

<sup>1</sup> Book VI., 420.

<sup>2</sup> Sulla was buried in the Campus Martius. (Plutarch, 'Sulla,' 38.) The corpse of Marius was dragged from his tomb by Sulla's order, and thrown into the Anio.

<sup>3</sup> It would seem that Luna is the better reading. (Dante, 'Inferno,'



The flight of hovering bird, the pulse that beats 650  
In offered victims, and the levin bolt.

All monsters first, by most unnatural birth  
Brought into being, in accursèd flames  
He bids consume. Then round the walls of Rome <sup>1</sup>  
Each trembling citizen in turn proceeds.

The priests, chief guardians of the public faith,  
With holy sprinkling purge the open space  
That borders on the wall ; in sacred garb  
Follows the lesser crowd : the Vestals come  
By priestess led with laurel crown bedecked, 660  
To whom alone is given the right to see

<sup>2</sup> Minerva's effigy that came from Troy.

Next come the keepers of the sacred books  
And fate's predictions ; who from Almo's brook  
Bring back Cybebe laved ; the augur too  
Taught to observe sinister flight of birds ;  
And those who serve the banquets to the gods ; -  
And Titian brethren ; and the priest of Mars,  
Proud of the buckler that adorns his neck ;  
By him the Flamen, on his noble head 670

The cap of office. While they tread the path  
That winds around the walls, the aged seer  
Collects the thunderbolts that fell from heaven,  
And lays them deep in earth, with muttered words  
Naming the spot accursèd. Next a steer,  
Picked for his swelling neck and beauteous form,  
He leads to the altar, and with slanting knife  
Spreads on his brow the meal, and pours the wine.  
The victim's struggles prove the gods averse ;  
But when the servers press upon his horns 680

<sup>1</sup> Such a ceremonial took place in A.D. 56 under Nero, after the temples of Jupiter and Minerva had been struck by lightning, and was probably witnessed by Lucan himself. (See Merivale's 'History of the Roman Empire,' chapter lii.)

<sup>2</sup> See Book IX., 1177.



He bends the knee and yields him to the blow.  
 No crimson torrent issues at the stroke,  
 But from the wound a dark empoisoned stream  
 Ebbs slowly downward. Aruns at the sight  
 Aghast, upon the entrails of the beast  
 Essayed to read the anger of the gods.  
 Their very colour terrified the seer ;  
 Spotted they were and pale, with sable streaks  
 Of lukewarm gore bespread ; the liver damp  
 With foul disease, and on the hostile part 690  
 The angry veins defiant ; of the lungs  
 The fibre hid, and through the vital parts  
 The membrane small ; the heart has ceased to throb ;  
 Blood oozes through the ducts ; the caul is split :  
 And, fatal omen of impending ill,  
 One lobe o'ergrows the other ; of the twain  
 The one lies flat and sick, the other beats  
 And keeps the pulse in rapid strokes astir.

Disaster's near approach thus learned, he cries—

' Whate'er may be the purpose of the gods, 700  
 ' 'Tis not for me to tell ; this offered beast  
 ' Not Jove possesses, but the gods below.  
 ' We dare not speak our fears, yet fear doth make  
 ' The future worse than fact. May all the gods  
 ' Prosper the tokens, and the sacrifice  
 ' Be void of truth, and Tages (famous seer) <sup>1</sup>  
 ' Have vainly taught these mysteries.' Such his words  
 Involved, mysterious. Figulus, to whom  
 For knowledge of the secret depths of space  
 And laws harmonious that guide the stars 710  
 Memphis could find no peer, then spake at large :

<sup>1</sup> Tages. A dwarf, with the figure of a child, but with grey hairs, ploughed up by a peasant near Tarquinii. He betrayed the secrets of Etruscan lore and straightway died. (Mommson, vol. i. p. 190 ; Dennis, 'Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria,' vol. i. p. 373.)

‘ Either,’ he said, ‘ the world and countless orbs  
‘ Throughout the ages wander at their will ;  
‘ Or, if the fates control them, ruin huge  
‘ Hangs o’er this city and o’er all mankind.  
‘ Shall Earth yawn open and engulph the towns ?  
‘ Shall scorching heat usurp the temperate air  
‘ And fields refuse their timely fruit ? The streams  
‘ Flow mixed with poison ? In what plague, ye gods,  
‘ In what destruction shall ye wreak your ire ? 720  
‘ Whate’er the truth, the days in which we live  
‘ Shall find a doom for many. Had the star  
‘ Of baleful Saturn, frigid in the height,  
‘ Kindled his lurid fires, the sky had poured  
‘ Its torrents forth as in Deucalion’s time,  
‘ And whelmed the world in waters. Or if thou,  
‘ Phœbus, beside the Nemean lion fierce  
‘ Wert driving now thy chariot, flames should seize  
‘ The universe and set the air ablaze.  
‘ These are at peace ; but, Mars, why art thou bent 730  
‘ On kindling thus the Scorpion, his tail  
‘ Portending evil and his claws aflame ?  
‘ Deep sunk is kindly Jupiter, and dull  
‘ Sweet Venus’ star, and rapid Mercury  
‘ Stays on his course : Mars only holds the sky.  
‘ Why does Orion’s sword too brightly shine ?  
‘ Why planets leave their paths and through the void  
‘ Thus journey on obscure ? ’Tis war that comes,  
‘ Fierce rabid war : the sword shall bear the rule  
‘ Confounding justice ; hateful crime usurp 740  
‘ The name of virtue ; and the havoc spread  
‘ Through many a year. But why entreat the gods ?  
‘ The end Rome longs for and the final peace  
‘ Comes with a despot. Draw thou out thy chain  
‘ Of lengthening slaughter, and (for such thy fate)  
‘ Make good thy liberty through civil war.’

The frightened people heard, and as they heard  
 His words prophetic made them fear the more.  
 But worse remained ; for as on Pindus' slopes  
 Possessed with fury from the Theban god 750  
 Speeds some Bacchante, thus in Roman streets  
 Behold a matron run, who, in her trance,  
 Relieves her bosom of the god within.

‘ Where dost thou snatch me, Pæan, to what shore  
 ‘ Through airy regions borne ? I see the snows  
 ‘ Of Thracian mountains ; and Philippi's plains  
 ‘ Lie broad beneath. But why these battle lines,  
 ‘ No foe to vanquish—Rome on either hand ?  
 ‘ Again I wander 'neath the rosy hues  
 ‘ That paint thine eastern skies, where regal Nile 760  
 ‘ Meets with his flowing wave the rising tide.  
 ‘ Known to mine eyes that mutilated trunk  
 ‘ That lies upon the sand ! Across the seas  
 ‘ By changing whirlpools to the burning climes  
 ‘ Of Libya borne, again I see the hosts  
 ‘ From Thracia brought by fate's command. And now  
 ‘ Thou bear'st me o'er the cloud-compelling Alps  
 ‘ And Pyrenean summits ; next to Rome.  
 ‘ There in mid-Senate see the closing scene  
 ‘ Of this foul war in foulest murder done. 770  
 ‘ Again the factions rise ; through all the world  
 ‘ Once more I pass ; but give me some new land,  
 ‘ Some other region, Phœbus, to behold  
 ‘ Washed by the Pontic billows ! for these eyes  
 ‘ Already once have seen Philippi's plains ! ’<sup>1</sup>  
 The frenzy left her and she speechless fell.

<sup>1</sup> The confusion between the site of the battle of Philippi and that of the battle of Pharsalia is common among the Roman writers. (See the note to Merivale, chapter xxvi.)

BOOK II

THE FLIGHT OF POMPEIUS

Remonstrance with the gods for allowing the future to be foretold, lines 1-18. Terror at Rome, 18-75. Relation of the massacres perpetrated by Marius and Sulla, 76-261. Interview between Brutus and Cato, 262-368. Marriage of Cato and Marcia, 368-426. Character of Cato, 427-443. Pompeius marches to Capua, 444. Geography of Italy, 450-495. Caesar overruns Northern Italy, 496-533. Episode of Domitius at Corfinium, 534-590. Pompeius's speech to his army, 591-671. He retires to Brundisium, 672-690. The town described, 690-709. Cnæus is sent to the East, 709-733. Caesar tries to block the harbour, 735-772. Pompeius escapes to Epirus, 773-838.

## BOOK II

### *THE FLIGHT OF POMPEIUS*

THUS was made plain the anger of the gods ;  
The world gave signs of war : Nature reversed  
In monstrous tumult fraught with prodigies  
Her laws, and prescient spake the coming guilt.

How seemed it just to thee, Olympus' king,  
That suffering mortals at thy doom should know  
By dreadful omens massacres to come ?

Or did the primal parent of the world

When first the flames gave way and yielding left  
Matter unformed to his subduing hand,

10

And realms unbalanced, fix by stern decree

Unalterable laws to bind the whole

(Himself, too, bound by law), so that for aye

All Nature moves within its fated bounds ?

Or, is Chance sovereign over all, and we

→ The sport of Fortune and her turning wheel ?

Whate'er be truth, keep thou the future veiled

From mortal vision, and amid their fears

May men still hope.

Thus known how great the woes

The world should suffer, from the truth divine,

20

A solemn fast was called, the courts were closed,

All men in private garb ; no purple hem

Adorned the togas of the chiefs of Rome ;

No plaints were uttered, and a voiceless grief



— Lay deep in every bosom : as when death  
 Knocks at some door but enters not as yet,  
 Before the mother calls the name aloud  
 Or bids her grieving maidens beat the breast,  
 While still she marks the glazing eye, and soothes  
 The stiffening limbs and gazes on the face, 30  
 In dread, not sorrow yet, in wondering awe  
 Of death approaching : and with mind distraught  
 Clings to the dying in a last embrace.

The matrons laid aside their wonted garb :  
 Crowds filled the temples—on the unpitying stones  
 Some dashed their bosoms ; others bathed with tears  
 The statues of the gods ; some tore their hair  
 Upon the holy threshold, and with shrieks  
 And vows unceasing called upon the names  
 Of those whom mortals supplicate. Nor all 40  
 Lay in the Thunderer's fane : at every shrine  
 Some prayers were offered which refused would bring  
 Reproach on heaven. One whose livid arms  
 Were dark with blows, whose cheeks with tears bedewed,  
 Cried, ' Now, unhappy mothers, rend the lock,  
 ' Nor keep your sorrows till the battle day :  
 ' Now ye may weep : when either chieftain wins  
 ' Rejoice ye must.' Thus sorrow stirs itself.

Meanwhile the men in seeking either camp  
 And marching onward in the path to war, 50  
 Address the cruel gods in just complaint.  
 ' Happy the youths who born in Punic days  
 ' On Cannæ's uplands or by Trebia's stream  
 ' Fought and were slain ! What wretched lot is ours !  
 ' No peace we ask for : let the nations rage ;  
 ' Rouse fiercest cities ! may the world find arms  
 ' To wage a war with Rome : let Parthian hosts  
 ' Rush forth from Susa ; Scythian Ister curb

' No more the Massagete : unconquered Rhine  
 ' Let loose from furthest North her fair-haired tribes : 60  
 ' Elbe, pour thy Suevians forth ! Let us be foes  
 ' Of all the peoples. May the Getan press  
 ' Here, and the Dacian there ; Pompeius meet  
 ' The Eastern archers, Cæsar in the West  
 ' Confront th' Iberian. Leave to Rome no hand  
 ' To raise against herself in civil strife.  
 ' Or, if Italia by the gods be doomed,  
 ' Let all the sky, fierce Parent, be dissolved  
 ' And falling on the earth in flaming bolts,  
 ' Their hands still bloodless, strike both leaders down, 70  
 ' With both their hosts ! Why plunge in novel crime  
 ' To settle which of them shall rule in Rome ?  
 ' Scarce were it worth the price of civil war  
 ' To hinder either.' Thus the patriot voice  
 Still found an utterance, soon to speak no more.

Meantime, the aged fathers o'er their fates

In anguish grieved, detesting life prolonged  
 That brought with it another civil war.

And thus spake one, to justify his fears :

' No other deeds the fates laid up in store 80  
 ' When Marius,<sup>1</sup> victor over Teuton hosts,  
 ' Afric's high conqueror, cast out from Rome,  
 ' Lay hid in marshy ooze, at thy behest,  
 ' O Fortune ! by the yielding soil concealed  
 ' And waving rushes ; but ere long the chains  
 ' Of prison wore his weak and aged frame,

<sup>1</sup> When dragged from his hiding place in the marsh, Marius was sent by the magistrates of Minturnæ to the house of a woman named Fannia, and there locked up in a dark apartment. It does not appear that he was there long. A Gallic soldier was sent to kill him ; 'and the eyes of Marius appeared to him to dart a strong flame, and a loud voice issued from the gloom, "Man, do you dare to kill Caius Marius?"' He rushed out exclaiming, 'I cannot kill Caius Marius.' (Plutarch, 'Marius,' 38.)

' And lengthened squalor : thus he paid for crime  
 ' His punishment beforehand ; doomed to die  
 ' Consul in triumph over wasted Rome.  
 ' Death oft refused him ; and the very foe, 90  
 ' In act of slaughter, shuddered in the stroke  
 ' And dropped the weapon from his nerveless hand.  
 ' For through the prison gloom a flame of light  
 ' He saw ; the deities of crime abhorred ;  
 ' The Marius to come. A voice proclaimed  
 ' Mysterious, " Hold ! the fates permit thee not  
 ' " That neck to sever. Many a death he owes  
 ' " To time's predestined laws ere his shall come ;  
 ' " Cease from thy madness. If ye seek revenge  
 ' " For that he blotted out your Cimbrian tribes, 100  
 ' " Let this man live, live out his fated days."  
 ' Not as their darling did the gods protect  
 ' The man of blood, but for his ruthless hand  
 ' Fit to prepare that sacrifice of gore  
 ' Which fate demanded. By the sea's despite  
 ' Borne to our foes, Jugurtha's wasted realm  
 ' He saw, now conquered ; there in squalid huts  
 ' Awhile he lay, and trod the hostile dust  
 ' Of Carthage, and his ruin matched with hers :  
 ' Each from the other's fate some solace drew, 110  
 ' And prostrate, pardoned heaven. On Libyan soil <sup>1</sup>  
 ' Fresh fury gathering,<sup>2</sup> next, when Fortune smiled  
 ' The prisons he threw wide and freed the slaves.  
 ' Forth rushed the murderous bands, their melted chains  
 ' Forged into weapons for his ruffian needs.

<sup>1</sup> The Governor of Libya sent an officer to Marius, who had landed in the neighbourhood of Carthage. The officer delivered his message, and Marius replied, 'Tell the Governor you have seen Caius Marius, a fugitive sitting on the ruins of Carthage,' a reply in which he not inaptly compared the fate of that city and his own changed fortune. (Plutarch, 'Marius,' 40.)

<sup>2</sup> In the 'gathering of fresh fury on Libyan soil,' there appears to be an allusion to the story of Antæus, in Book IV.

- ' No charge he gave to mere recruits in guilt  
 ' Who brought not to the camp some proof of crime.  
 ' How dread that day when conquering Marius seized  
 ' The city's ramparts ! with what fated speed  
 ' Death strode upon his victims ! plebs alike <sup>1</sup> 120  
 ' And nobles perished ; far and near the sword  
 ' Struck at his pleasure, till the temple floors  
 ' Ran wet with slaughter and the crimson stream  
 ' Befouled with slippery gore the holy walls.  
 ' No age found pity : men of failing years,  
 ' Just tottering to the grave, were hurled to death ;  
 ' From infants, in their being's earliest dawn,<sup>2</sup>  
 ' The growing life was severed. For what crime ?  
 ' 'Twas cause enough for death that they could die.  
 ' The fury grew : soon 'twas a sluggard's part 130  
 ' To seek the guilty : hundreds died to swell  
 ' The tale of victims. Shamed by empty hands,  
 ' The bloodstained conqueror snatched a reeking head  
 ' From neck unknown. One way of life remained,  
 ' To kiss with shuddering lips the red right hand.<sup>3</sup>  
 ' Degenerate people ! Had ye hearts of men,  
 ' Though ye were threatened by a thousand swords,  
 ' Far rather death than centuries of life  
 ' Bought at such price ; much more that breathing space  
 ' Till Sulla comes again.<sup>4</sup> But time would fail 140

<sup>1</sup> These lines are quoted by Holinshed in his 'Chronicles' as descriptive of the horrors of a Scottish inroad which took place in 1296.

<sup>2</sup> See Ben Jonson's 'Catiline,' Act i., scene 1, speaking of the Sullan massacre.

*Cethegus.* Not infants in the porch of life were free.

*Catiline.* 'Twas crime enough that they had lives : to strike but only those that could do hurt was dull and poor : some fell to make the number as some the prey.

<sup>3</sup> Whenever he did not salute a man, or return his salute, this was a signal for massacre. (Plutarch, 'Marius,' 43.)

<sup>4</sup> The Marian massacre was in B.C. 87-86 ; the Sullan in 82-81.

- ' In weeping for the deaths of all who fell.  
 ' Encircled by innumerable bands  
 ' Fell Bæbius, his limbs asunder torn,  
 ' His vitals dragged abroad. Antonius too,  
 ' Prophet of ill, whose hoary head <sup>1</sup> was placed,  
 ' Dripping with blood, upon the festal board.  
 ' There headless fell the Crassi; mangled frames  
 ' 'Neath Fimbria's falchion: and the prison cells  
 ' Were wet with tribunes' blood. Hard by the fane  
 ' Where dwells the goddess and the sacred fire, 150  
 ' Fell aged Scævola, though that gory hand <sup>2</sup>  
 ' Had spared him, but the feeble tide of blood  
 ' Still left the flame alive upon the hearth.  
 ' That selfsame year the seventh time restored <sup>3</sup>  
 ' The Consul's rods; that year to Marius brought  
 ' The end of life, when he at Fortune's hands  
 ' All ills had suffered; all her goods enjoyed.  
 ' And what of those who at the Sacriport <sup>4</sup>  
 ' And Colline gate were slain, then, when the rule  
 ' Of Earth and all her nations almost left 160  
 ' This city for another, and the chiefs  
 ' Who led the Samnite hoped that Rome might bleed  
 ' More than at Caudium's Forks she bled of old?  
 ' Then came great Sulla to avenge the dead,  
 ' And all the blood still left within her frame

<sup>1</sup> The head of Antonius was struck off and brought to Marius at supper. He was the grandfather of the triumvir.

<sup>2</sup> Scævola, it would appear, was put to death after Marius the elder died, by the younger Marius. He was Pontifex Maximus, and slain by the altar of Vesta.

<sup>3</sup> B.C. 86, Marius and Cinna were Consuls. Marius died seventeen days afterwards, in the seventieth year of his age.

<sup>4</sup> The Battle of Sacriportus was fought between Marius the younger and the Sullan army in B.C. 82. Marius was defeated with great loss, and fled to Præneste, a town which afterwards submitted to Sulla, who put all the inhabitants to death (line 215). At the Colline gate was fought the decisive battle between Sulla and the Samnites, who, after a furious contest, were defeated.



‘ Drew from the city ; for the surgeon knife  
‘ Which shore the cancerous limbs cut in too deep,  
‘ And shed the life stream from still healthy veins.  
‘ True that the guilty fell, but not before  
‘ All else had perished. Hatred had free course 170  
‘ And anger reigned unbridled by the law.  
‘ The victor’s voice spake once ; but each man struck  
‘ Just as he wished or willed. The fatal steel  
‘ Urged by the servant laid the master low.  
‘ Sons dripped with gore of sires ; and brothers fought  
‘ For the foul trophy of a father slain,  
‘ Or slew each other for the price of blood.  
‘ Men sought the tombs and, mingling with the dead,  
‘ Hoped for escape ; the wild beasts’ dens were full.  
‘ One strangled died ; another from the height 180  
‘ Fell headlong down upon the un pitying earth,  
‘ And from the encrimsoned victor snatched his death :  
‘ One built his funeral pyre and oped his veins,  
‘ And scaled the furnace ere his blood was gone.  
‘ Borne through the trembling town the leaders’ heads  
‘ Were piled in middle forum : hence men knew  
‘ Of murders else unpublished. Not on gates  
‘ Of Diomedes,<sup>1</sup> tyrant king of Thrace,  
‘ Nor of Antæus, Libya’s giant brood,  
‘ Were hung such horrors ; nor in Pisa’s hall 190  
‘ Were seen and wept for when the suitors died.  
‘ Decay had touched the features of the slain  
‘ When round the mouldering heap, with trembling steps  
‘ The grief-struck parents sought and stole their dead.  
‘ I, too, the body of my brother slain  
‘ Thought to remove, my victim to the peace

<sup>1</sup> Diomedes was said to feed his horses on human flesh. For Antæus see Book IV., 660. Œnomaus was king of Pisa in Elis. Those who came to sue for his daughter’s hand had to compete with him in a chariot race, and if defeated were put to death.



- ‘ Which Sulla made, and place his loved remains
- ‘ On the forbidden pyre. The head I found,
- ‘ But not the butchered corse.

Why now renew

- ‘ The tale of Catulus’s shade appeased ? 200
- ‘ And those dread tortures which the living frame
- ‘ Of Marius<sup>1</sup> suffered at the tomb of him
- ‘ Who haply wished them not ? Pierced, mangled, torn—
- ‘ Nor speech nor grasp was left : his every limb
- ‘ Maimed, hacked and riven ; yet the fatal blow
- ‘ The murderers with savage purpose spared.
- ‘ ’Twere scarce believed that one poor mortal frame
- ‘ Such agonies could bear ere death should come.
- ‘ Thus crushed beneath some ruin lie the dead ;
- ‘ Thus shapeless from the deep are borne the drowned. 210
- ‘ Why spoil delight by mutilating thus,
- ‘ The head of Marius ? To please Sulla’s heart
- ‘ That mangled visage must be known to all.
- ‘ Fortune, high goddess of Præneste’s fane,
- ‘ Saw all her townsmen hurried to their deaths
- ‘ In one fell instant. All the hope of Rome,
- ‘ The flower of Latium, stained with blood the field
- ‘ Where once the peaceful tribes their votes declared.
- ‘ Famine and Sword, the raging sky and sea,
- ‘ And Earth upheaved, have laid such numbers low : 220
- ‘ But ne’er one man’s revenge. Between the slain
- ‘ And living victims there was space no more,
- ‘ Death thus let slip, to deal the fatal blow.
- ‘ Hardly when struck they fell ; the severed head
- ‘ Scarce toppled from the shoulders ; but the slain
- ‘ Blent in a weighty pile of massacre
- ‘ Pressed out the life and helped the murderer’s arm.
- ‘ Secure from stain upon his lofty throne,

<sup>1</sup> The brother of the Consul.

‘ Unshuddering sat the author of the whole,  
‘ Nor feared that at his word such thousands fell. 230  
‘ At length the Tuscan flood received the dead—  
‘ The first upon his waves ; the last on those  
‘ That lay beneath them ; vessels in their course  
‘ Were stayed, and while the lower current flowed  
‘ Yet to the sea, the upper stood on high  
‘ Dammed back by carnage. Through the streets mean-  
while

‘ In headlong torrents ran a tide of blood,  
‘ Which furrowing its path through town and field  
‘ Forced the slow river on. But now his banks  
‘ No longer held him, and the dead were thrown 240  
‘ Back on the fields above. With labour huge  
‘ At length he struggled to his goal and stretched  
‘ In crimson streak across the Tuscan Sea.

‘ For deeds like these, shall Sulla now be styled  
‘ “ Darling of Fortune,” “ Saviour of the State ” ?  
‘ For these, a tomb in middle field of Mars  
‘ Record his fame ? Like horrors now return  
‘ For us to suffer ; and the civil war  
‘ Thus shall be waged again and thus shall end.  
‘ Yet worse disasters may our fears suggest, 250  
‘ For now with greater carnage of mankind  
‘ The rival hosts in weightier battle meet.

‘ To exiled Marius, the prize of war  
‘ Was Rome regained ; triumphant Sulla knew  
‘ No greater joy than on his hated foes  
‘ To wreak his vengeance with unsparing sword.  
‘ But these more powerful rivals Fortune calls—  
‘ To worse ambitions ; nor would either chief  
‘ For such reward as Sulla’s wage the war.’

Thus, mindful of his youth, the aged man 260  
Wept for the past, but feared the coming days.

Such terrors found in haughty Brutus' breast  
No home. When others sat them down to fear  
He did not so, but in the dewy night  
When the great wain was turning round the pole  
He sought his kinsman Cato's humble home.  
Him sleepless did he find, not for himself  
Fearing, but pondering the fates of Rome,  
And deep in public cares. And thus he spake :  
' O thou in whom that virtue, which of yore 270  
' Took flight from earth, now finds its only home,  
' Outcast to all besides, but safe with thee :  
' Vouchsafe thy counsel to my wavering soul  
' And make my weakness strength. While Cæsar some,  
' Pompeius others, follow in the fight,  
' Cato is Brutus' guide. Art thou for peace,  
' Holding thy footsteps in a tottering world  
' Unshaken ? Or wilt thou with the leaders' crimes  
' And with the people's fury take thy part,  
' And by thy presence purge the war of guilt ? 280  
' In impious battles men unsheath the sword ;  
' But each by cause impelled : the household crime ;  
' Laws feared in peace ; want by the sword removed ;  
' And credit, in the ruin of a world  
' Blending its ruin. Drawn by hope of gain,  
' And not by thirst for blood, they seek the camp.  
' Shall Cato for war's sake make war alone ?  
' What profits it through all these wicked years  
' That thou hast lived untainted ? This were all  
' Thy meed of virtue, that the wars which find 290  
' Guilt in all else, shall make thee guilty too.  
' Ye gods, permit not that this fatal strife  
' Should stir those hands to action ! When the clouds  
' Of flying javelins hiss upon the air,  
' Let not a dart be thine ; nor spent in vain  
' Such virtue ! All the fury of the war

‘ Shall launch itself on thee, for who, when faint  
‘ And wounded, would not rush upon thy sword,  
‘ Take thence his death, and make the murder thine ?  
‘ Do thou live on thy peaceful life apart 300  
‘ As on their paths the stars unshaken roll.  
‘ The lower air that verges on the earth  
‘ Gives flame and fury to the levin bolt ;  
‘ The deeps below the world engulph the winds  
‘ And tracts of flaming fire. By Jove’s decree  
‘ Olympus rears his summit o’er the clouds :  
‘ In lowlier valleys storms and winds contend,  
‘ But peace eternal reigns upon the heights.  
‘ What joy for Cæsar, if the tidings come  
‘ That such a citizen has joined the war ? 310  
‘ Glad would he see thee e’en in Magnus’ tents ;  
‘ For Cato’s conduct shall approve his own.  
‘ Pompeius, with the Consul in his ranks,  
‘ And half the Senate and the other chiefs,  
‘ Vexes my spirit ; and should Cato too  
‘ Bend to a master’s yoke, in all the world  
‘ The one man free is Cæsar. But if thou  
‘ For freedom and thy country’s laws alone  
‘ Be pleased to raise the sword, nor Magnus then  
‘ Nor Cæsar shall in Brutus find a foe. 320  
‘ Not till the fight is fought shall Brutus strike,  
‘ Then strike the victor.’

Brutus thus ; but spake

Cato from inmost breast these sacred words :

✓ ‘ Chief in all wickedness is civil war,  
‘ Yet virtue in the paths marked out by fate  
‘ Treads on securely. Heaven’s will be the crime  
‘ To have made even Cato guilty. Who has strength  
‘ To gaze unawed upon a toppling world ?  
‘ When stars and sky fall headlong, and when earth  
‘ Slips from her base, who sits with folded hands ? 330

‘ Shall unknown nations, touched by western strife,  
‘ And monarchs born beneath another clime  
‘ Brave the dividing seas to join the war ?  
‘ Shall Scythian tribes desert their distant north,  
‘ And Getæ haste to view the fall of Rome,  
‘ And I look idly on ? As some fond sire,  
‘ Reft of his sons, compelled by grief, himself  
‘ Marshals the long procession to the tomb,  
‘ Thrusts his own hand within the funeral flames,  
‘ Soothing his heart, and, as the lofty pyre 340  
‘ Rises on high, applies the kindled torch :  
‘ Nought, Rome, shall tear thee from me, till I hold  
‘ Thy form in death embraced ; and Freedom’s name,  
‘ Shade though it be, I’ll follow to the grave.  
‘ Yea ! let the cruel gods exact in full  
‘ Rome’s expiation : of no drop of blood  
‘ The war be robbed. I would that, to the gods  
‘ Of heaven and hell devoted, this my life  
‘ Might satisfy their vengeance. Decius fell,  
‘ Crushed by the hostile ranks. When Cato falls 350  
‘ Let Rhine’s fierce barbarous hordes and both the hosts  
‘ Thrust through my frame their darts ! May I alone  
‘ Receive in death the wounds of all the war !  
‘ Thus may the people be redeemed, and thus  
‘ Rome for her guilt pay the atonement due.  
‘ Why should men die who wish to bear the yoke  
‘ And shrink not from the tyranny to come ?  
‘ Strike me, and me alone, of laws and rights  
‘ In vain the guardian : this vicarious life  
‘ Shall give Hesperia peace and end her toils. 360  
‘ Who then will reign shall find no need for war.  
‘ You ask, Why follow Magnus ? If he wins <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So Cicero : ‘ Our Cnæus is wonderfully anxious for such a royalty as Sulla’s. I who tell you know it.’ (‘ Ep. ad Att.,’ ix. 7.)



' He too will claim the Empire of the world.  
 ' Then let him, conquering with my service, learn  
 ' Not for himself to conquer.' Thus he spoke  
 And stirred the blood that ran in Brutus' veins  
 Moving the youth to action in the war.

Soon as the sun dispelled the chilly night,  
 The sounding doors flew wide, and from the tomb  
 Of dead Hortensius grieving Marcia came.<sup>1</sup>

370

First joined in wedlock to a greater man  
 Three children did she bear to grace his home :  
 Then Cato to Hortensius gave the dame

To be a fruitful mother of his sons  
 And join their houses in a closer tie.

And now the last sad offices were done  
 She came with hair dishevelled, beaten breast,  
 And ashes on her brow, and features worn  
 With grief ; thus only pleasing to the man.

' When youth was in me and maternal power

380

' I did thy bidding, Cato, and received

' A second husband : now in years grown old

' Ne'er to be parted I return to thee.

' Renew our former pledges undefiled :

' Give back the name of wife : upon my tomb

' Let " Marcia, spouse to Cato," be engraved.

' Nor let men question in the time to come,

' Didst thou compel, or did I willing leave

' My first espousals. Not in happy times,

' Partner of joys, I come ; but days of care

390

' And labour shall be mine to share with thee.

<sup>1</sup> Marcia was first married to Cato, and bore him three sons ; he then yielded her to Hortensius. On his death she returned to Cato. (Plutarch, 'Cato,' 25, 52.) It was in reference to this that Cæsar charged him with making a traffic of his marriage ; but Plutarch says 'to accuse Cato of filthy lucre is like upbraiding Hercules with cowardice.' After the marriage Marcia remained at Rome while Cato hurried after Pompeius.



- ‘ Nor leave me here, but take me to the camp,  
 ‘ Thy fond companion : why should Magnus’ wife  
 ‘ Be nearer, Cato, to the wars than thine ? ’

Although the times were warlike and the fates  
 Called to the fray, he lent a willing ear.

Yet must they plight their faith in simple form  
 Of law ; their witnesses the gods alone.

No festal wreath of flowers crowned the gate

Nor glittering fillet on each post entwined ;

400

No flaming torch was there, nor ivory steps,

No couch with robes of brodered gold adorned ;

No comely matron placed upon her brow

The bridal garland, or forbad the foot<sup>1</sup>

To touch the threshold stone ; no saffron veil

Concealed the timid blushes of the bride ;

No jewelled belt confined her flowing robe<sup>2</sup>

Nor modest circle bound her neck ; no scarf

Hung lightly on the snowy shoulder’s edge

Around the naked arm. Just as she came,

410

Wearing the garb of sorrow, while the wool

Covered the purple border of her robe,

Thus was she wedded. As she greets her sons

She greets her husband. Nor, in Sabine use

Did mournful Cato share the festal taunt :

Nor friend nor foe was bidden : silent both

They joined in marriage, yet content, unseen

By any save by Brutus. Sad and stern

<sup>1</sup> The bride was carried over the threshold of her new home, for to stumble on it would be of evil omen. Plutarch (‘Romulus’) refers this custom to the rape of the Sabine women, who were ‘so lift up and carried away by force.’ (North, volume i., p. 88, Edition by Windham.) I have read ‘vetuit’ in this passage, though ‘vitat’ appears to be a better variation according to the manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> The bride was dressed in a long white robe, bound round the waist with a girdle. She had a veil of bright yellow colour. (‘Dict. Antiq.’)

On Cato's lineaments the marks of grief  
Were still unsoftened, and the hoary hair 420  
Hung o'er his reverend visage ; for since first  
Men flew to arms, his locks were left unkempt  
To stream upon his brow, and on his chin  
His beard untended grew. 'Twas his alone  
Who hated not, nor loved, for all mankind  
To mourn alike. Nor did their former couch  
Again receive them, for his lofty soul  
E'en lawful love resisted. 'Twas his rule <sup>1</sup>  
Inflexible, to keep the middle path  
Marked out and bounded ; to observe the laws 430  
Of natural right ; and for his country's sake  
To risk his life, his all, as not for self  
Brought into being, but for all the world :  
Such was his creed. To him a sumptuous feast  
Was hunger conquered, and the lowly hut,  
Which scarce kept out the winter, was a home  
Equal to palaces : a robe of price  
Such hairy garments as were worn of old :  
The end of marriage, offspring. To the State  
Father alike and husband, right and law — 440  
He ever followed with unswerving step :  
No thought of selfish pleasure turned the scale  
In Cato's acts, or swayed his upright soul.

Meanwhile Pompeius led his trembling host  
To fields Campanian, and held the walls  
First founded by the chief of Trojan race.  
These chose he for the central seat of war,  
Some troops despatching who might meet the foe  
Where shady Apennine lifts up the ridge  
Of mid Italia ; nearest to the sky 450

<sup>1</sup> 'I know not three wiser precepts for the conduct either of princes or private men.' Sir W. Temple, i. 184, quoting this passage.

Upsoaring, with the seas on either hand,  
 The upper and the lower. Pisa's sands  
 Breaking the margin of the Tuscan deep,  
 Here bound his mountains : there Ancona's towers  
 Laved by Dalmatian waves. Rivers immense,  
 In his recesses born, pass on their course,  
 To either sea diverging. To the left  
 Metaurus and Crustumium's torrent fall  
 And Sena's streams and Aufidus who bursts  
 On Adrian billows ; and that mighty flood 460  
 Which, more than all the rivers of the earth,  
 Sweeps down the soil and tears the woods away  
 And drains Hesperia's springs. In fabled lore  
 His banks were first by poplar shade enclosed :<sup>1</sup>  
 And when by Phaethon the waning day  
 Was drawn in path transverse, and all the heaven  
 Blazed with his car aflame, and from the depths  
 Of inmost earth were rapt all other floods,  
 Padus still rolled in pride of stream along.  
 Nile were no larger, but that o'er the sand 470  
 Of level Egypt he spreads out his waves ;  
 Nor Ister, if he sought the Scythian main  
 Unhelped upon his journey through the world  
 By tributary waters not his own.  
 But on the right hand Tiber has his source,  
 Deep-flowing Rutuba, Vulturnus swift,  
 And Sarnus breathing vapours of the night<sup>2</sup>  
 Rise there, and Liris with Vestinian wave  
 Still gliding through Marica's shady grove,  
 And Siler flowing through Salernian meads : 480

<sup>1</sup> Phaethon's sisters, who yoked the horses of the Sun to the chariot for their brother, were turned into poplars. Phaethon was flung by Jupiter into the river Po.

<sup>2</sup> Sarnus, site of the battle in which Narses defeated Teias, the last of the Ostrogoths, in 553 A.D.

And Macra's swift unnavigable stream  
Near Luna rests in Ocean. On the Alps  
Whose spurs strike plainwards, and on fields of Gaul  
The cloudy heights of Apennine look down  
In further distance : on his nearer slopes  
The Sabine turns the ploughshare ; Umbrian kine  
And Marsian fatten ; with his pineclad rocks  
He girds the tribes of Latium, nor leaves  
Hesperia's soil until the waves that beat  
On Scylla's cave compel. His southern spurs 490  
Extend to Juno's temple, and of old  
Stretched further than Italia, till the main  
O'erstepped his limits and the lands repelled.  
But, when the seas were joined, Pelorus claimed  
His latest summits for Sicilia's isle.

Cæsar, in rage for war, rejoicing finds  
Foes in Italia ; no bloodless steps  
Nor vacant homes had pleased him ;<sup>1</sup> so his march  
Were wasted : now the coming war was joined  
Unbroken to the past ; to force the gates, 500  
Not find them open, fire and sword to bring  
Upon the harvests, not through fields unharmed  
To pass his legions—this was Cæsar's joy ;  
In peaceful guise to march, this was his shame.  
Italia's cities, doubtful in their choice,  
Though to the earliest onset of the war  
About to yield, strengthen their walls with mounds  
And deepest trench encircling : massive stones  
And bolts of war to hurl upon the foe  
They place upon the turrets. Magnus most 510  
The people's favour held, yet faith with fear  
Fought in their breasts. As when, with strident blast,

<sup>1</sup> See the note to Book I., 165. In reality Cæsar found little resistance, and did not ravage the country.

A southern tempest has possessed the main  
 And all the billows follow in its track :  
 Then, by the Storm-king smitten, should the earth  
 Set Eurus free upon the swollen deep,  
 It shall not yield to him, though cloud and sky  
 Confess his strength ; but in the former wind  
 Still find its master. But their fears prevailed,  
 And Cæsar's fortune, o'er their wavering faith. 520  
 For Libo fled Etruria ; Umbria lost  
 Her freedom, driving Thermus <sup>1</sup> from her bounds ;  
 Great Sulla's son, unworthy of his sire,  
 Feared at the name of Cæsar : Varus sought  
 The caves and woods, when smote the hostile horse  
 The gates of Auximon ; and Spinther driven  
 From Asculum, the victor on his track,  
 Fled with his standards, soldierless ; and thou,  
 Scipio, didst leave Nuceria's citadel  
 Deserted, though by bravest legions held 530  
 Sent home by Cæsar for the Parthian war ; <sup>2</sup>  
 Whom Magnus earlier, to his kinsman gave  
 A loan of Roman blood, to fight the Gaul.  
 But brave Domitius held firm his post <sup>3</sup>  
 Behind Corfinium's ramparts ; his the troops  
 Who newly levied kept the judgment hall  
 At Milo's trial.<sup>4</sup> When from far the plain  
 Rolled up a dusty cloud, beneath whose veil  
 The sheen of armour glistening in the sun,  
 Revealed a marching host. ' Dash down,' he cried, 540

<sup>1</sup> Thermus, to whom Iguvium had been entrusted by the Senate, was compelled to quit it owing to the disaffection of the inhabitants. (Merivale, chapter xiv.) Auximon in a similar way rose against Varus.

<sup>2</sup> After Cæsar's campaign with the Nervii, Pompeius had lent him a legion. When the Parthian war broke out and the Senate required each of the two leaders to supply a legion for it, Pompeius demanded the return of the legion which he had sent to Gaul ; and Cæsar returned it, together with one of his own. They were, however, retained in Italy.

<sup>3</sup> See Book VII., 695.

<sup>4</sup> Book I., 370.



‘ Swift as ye can, the bridge that spans the stream ;  
‘ And thou, O river, from thy mountain source  
‘ With all thy torrents rushing, planks and beams  
‘ Ruined and broken on thy foaming breast  
‘ Bear onward to the sea. The war shall pause  
‘ Here, at these bounds : here shall this headlong chief  
‘ Await in idleness our victory.’

He bade his squadrons, speeding from the walls,  
Charge on the bridge : in vain : for Cæsar saw  
They sought to free the river from his chains<sup>1</sup> 550  
And bar his march ; and roused to ire, he cried :

‘ Were not the walls sufficient to protect  
‘ Your coward souls ? Seek ye by barricades  
‘ And streams to keep me back ? What though the flood  
‘ Of swollen Ganges were across my path ?  
‘ Now Rubicon is passed, no stream on earth  
‘ Shall hinder Cæsar ! Forward, horse and foot,  
‘ And ere it totters rush upon the bridge.’

Urged in their swiftest gallop to the front  
Dashed the light horse across the sounding plain ; 560  
And suddenly, as storm in summer, flew  
A cloud of javelins forth, by sinewy arms  
Hurled at the foe ; the guard is put to flight,  
And conquering Cæsar, seizing on the bridge,  
Compels the enemy to keep the walls.

Now do the mighty engines, soon to hurl  
Gigantic stones, press forward, and the ram  
Creeps ’neath the ramparts ; when the gates fly back,  
And lo ! the traitor troops (foul crime in war)  
Yield up their leader. Him they place before 570  
His proud compatriot ; yet with upright form,  
And scornful features and with noble mien,

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, by the breaking of the bridge, the river would become a serious obstacle to Cæsar.



- He asks his death. But Cæsar knew his wish  
 Was punishment, and pardon was his fear :  
 ‘ Live though thou wouldst not,’ so the chieftain spake,  
 ‘ And by my gift, unwilling, see the day :  
 ‘ Be to my conquered foes the cause of hope,  
 ‘ Proof of my clemency—or if thou wilt  
 ‘ Take arms again—and should’st thou conquer, count  
 ‘ This pardon nothing.’ Thus he spake, and bade 580  
 Let loose the bands and set the captive free.  
 Ah ! better had he died, and fortune spared  
 The Roman’s last dishonour, whose worse doom  
 It is, that he who joined his country’s camp  
 And fought with Magnus for the Senate’s cause  
 Should gain for this—a pardon ! Yet he curbed  
 His anger, thinking, ‘ Wilt thou then to Rome  
 ‘ And peaceful scenes, degenerate ? Rather war,  
 ‘ The furious battle and the certain end !  
 ‘ Break with life’s ties : be Cæsar’s gift in vain.’ 590  
 Pompeius, ignorant that his captain thus  
 Was taken, armed his levies newly raised  
 To give his legions strength ; and as he thought  
 To sound his trumpets with the coming dawn,  
 To test his soldiers ere he moved his camp  
 Thus in majestic tones their ranks addressed :  
 ‘ True host of Rome ! avengers of her laws  
 ‘ Ranked ’neath the standards of the better right,  
 ‘ To whom the Senate gives no private arms,  
 ‘ Ask by your voices for the battle sign. 600  
 ‘ Fierce falls the pillage on Hesperian fields,  
 ‘ And Gallia’s fury o’er the snowy Alps  
 ‘ Is poured upon us. Cæsar’s swords at last  
 ‘ Are red with Roman blood. But with the wound  
 ‘ We gain the better cause ; the crime is theirs.  
 ‘ Through me her captain Rome for vengeance calls ;

' 'Tis no true fight to wreak your country's ire.  
 ' Was that a war when Catilina's hand  
 ' Lifted against her roofs the flaming torch,  
 ' And, partner in his fury, Lentulus, 610  
 ' And mad Cethegus<sup>1</sup> with his naked arm ?  
 ' Is such thy madness, Cæsar ? when the Fates  
 ' With great Camillus' and Metellus' names  
 ' Might place thine own, dost thou prefer to rank  
 ' With Marius and Cinna ? Swift shall be  
 ' Thy fall : as Lepidus before the sword  
 ' Of Catulus ; or who my axes felt,  
 ' Carbo,<sup>2</sup> now buried in Sicanian tomb ;  
 ' Or who, in exile, roused Iberia's hordes,  
 ' Sertorius—yet, witness Heaven, with these 620  
 ' I hate to rank thee ; hate the task that Rome  
 ' Has laid upon me, to oppose thy rage.  
 ' Would that in safety from the Parthian war  
 ' And Scythian steppes had conquering Crassus come !  
 ' Then haply hadst thou fallen by the hand  
 ' That smote vile Spartacus the robber foe.  
 ' But if among my triumphs fate has said  
 ' Thy conquest shall be written, know this heart  
 ' Still sends the life blood coursing : and this arm  
 ' Still vigorously flings the dart afield. 630  
 ' He deems me slothful. Cæsar, thou shalt learn  
 ' We brook not peace because we lag in war.  
 ' Old, does he call me ? Fear not ye mine age.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This family is also alluded to by Horace ('*Ars Poetica*,' 50) as having worn a garment of ancient fashion leaving their arms bare. (See also Book VI., 944.)

<sup>2</sup> In B.C. 77, after the death of Sulla. Carbo had been defeated by Pompeius in 81 B.C., on which occasion Pompeius had, at the early age of twenty-five, demanded and obtained his first triumph. The war with Sertorius lasted till 71 B.C., when Pompeius and Metellus triumphed in respect of his overthrow.

<sup>3</sup> See Book I., line 371.

' Let me be elder, if his soldiers are.  
 ' The highest point a citizen can reach  
 ' And leave his people free, is mine : a throne  
 ' Alone were higher ; whoso would surpass  
 ' Pompeius, aims at that. Both Consuls stand  
 ' Here ; here for battle stand your lawful chiefs :  
 ' And shall this Caesar drag the Senate down ? 640  
 ' Not with such blindness, not so lost to shame  
 ' Does Fortune rule. Does he take heart from Gaul,  
 ' For years on years rebellious, and a life  
 ' Spent there in labour ? or because he fled  
 ' Rhine's icy torrent and the shifting pools  
 ' He calls an ocean ? or unchallenged sought  
 ' Britannia's cliffs ; then turned his back in flight ?  
 ' Or does he boast because his citizens  
 ' Were driven in arms to leave their hearths and homes ?  
 ' Ah, vain delusion ! not from thee they fled : 650  
 ' My steps they follow—mine, whose conquering signs  
 ' Swept all the ocean,<sup>1</sup> and who, ere the moon  
 ' Twice filled her orb and waned, compelled to flight  
 ' The pirate, shrinking from the open sea,  
 ' And humbly begging for a narrow home  
 ' In some poor nook on shore. 'Twas I again  
 ' Who, happier far than Sulla, drave to death<sup>2</sup>  
 ' That king who, exiled to the deep recess  
 ' Of Scythian Pontus, held the fates of Rome  
 ' Still in the balances. Where is the land 660  
 ' That has not seen my trophies ? Icy waves  
 ' Of northern Phasis, hot Egyptian shores,  
 ' And where Syene 'neath its noontide sun

<sup>1</sup> In B.C. 67, Pompeius swept the pirates off the seas. The whole campaign did not last three months.

<sup>2</sup> From B.C. 66 to B.C. 63, Pompeius conquered Mithridates, Syria and the East, except Parthia.

' Knows shade on neither hand : <sup>1</sup> all these have learned  
 ' To fear Pompeius : and far Bætis' <sup>2</sup> stream,  
 ' Last of all floods to join the refluent sea.  
 ' Arabia and the warlike hordes that dwell  
 ' Beside the Euxine wave : the famous land  
 ' That lost the golden fleece ; Cilician wastes,  
 ' And Cappadocian, and the Jews who pray 670  
 ' Before an unknown God ; Sophene soft—  
 ' All felt my yoke. What conquests now remain,  
 ' What wars not civil can my kinsman wage ? '

No loud acclaim received his words, nor shout  
 Asked for the promised battle : and the chief  
 Drew back the standards, for the soldier's fears  
 Were in his soul alike ; nor dared he trust  
 An army, vanquished by the fame alone  
 Of Cæsar's powers, to fight for such a prize.

And as some bull, his early combat lost, 680  
 Forth driven from the herd, in exile roams  
 Through lonely plains or secret forest depths,  
 Whets on opposing trunks his growing horn,  
 And proves himself for battle, till his neck  
 Is ribbed afresh with muscle : then returns,  
 Defiant of the hind, and victor now  
 Leads wheresoe'er he will his lowing bands :  
 Thus Magnus, yielding to a stronger foe,  
 Gave up Italia, and sought in flight

<sup>1</sup> Being (as was supposed) exactly under the Equator. Syene (the modern Assouan) is the town mentioned by the priest of Sais, who told Herodotus that 'between Syene and Elephantine are two hills with conical tops. The name of one of them is Crophi, and of the other, Mophi. Mid-way between them are the fountains of the Nile.' (Herod., II., chapter 28.) And see 'Paradise Regained,' IV., 70 :—

' Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,  
 ' Meroe, Nilotick isle ; . . . '

<sup>2</sup> Bætis is the Guadalquivir.

Brundusium's sheltering battlements. Here of old 690  
 Fled Cretan settlers when the dusky sail<sup>1</sup>  
 Spread the false message of the hero dead ;  
 Here, where Hesperia, curving as a bow,  
 Draws back her coast, a little tongue of land  
 Shuts in with bending horns the sounding main.  
 Yet insecure the spot, unsafe in storm,  
 Were it not sheltered by an isle on which  
 The Adriatic billows dash and fall,  
 And tempests lose their strength : on either hand  
 A craggy cliff opposing breaks the gale 700  
 That beats upon them, while the ships within  
 Held by their trembling cables ride secure.  
 Hence to the mariner the boundless deep  
 Lies open, whether for Coreyra's port  
 He shapes his sails, or for Illyria's shore,  
 And Epidamnus facing to the main  
 Ionian. Here, when raging in his might  
 Pierce Adria whelms in foam Calabria's coast,  
 When clouds tempestuous veil Ceraunus' height,  
 The sailor finds a haven.

When the chief 710

Could find no hope in battle on the soil  
 He now was quitting, and the lofty Alps  
 Forbad Iberia, to his son he spake,  
 The eldest scion of that noble stock :  
 • Search out the far recesses of the earth,  
 • Nile and Euphrates, wheresoe'er the fame  
 • Of Magnus lives, where, through thy father's deeds,  
 • The people tremble at the name of Rome.  
 • Lead to the sea again the pirate bands ;

<sup>1</sup> Theseus, on returning from his successful exploit in Crete, hoisted by mistake black sails instead of white, thus spreading false intelligence of disaster.



‘ Rouse Egypt’s kings ; Tigranes, wholly mine, 720  
‘ And Pharnaces and all the vagrant tribes  
‘ Of both Armenias ; and the Pontic hordes,  
‘ Warlike and fierce ; the dwellers on the hills  
‘ Rhipæan, and by that dead northern marsh  
‘ Whose frozen surface bears the loaded wain.  
‘ Why further stay thee ? Let the eastern world  
‘ Sound with the war, all cities of the earth  
‘ Conquered by me, as vassals, to my camp  
‘ Send all their levied hosts. And you whose names  
‘ Within the Latian book recorded stand, 730  
‘ Strike for Epirus with the northern wind ;  
‘ And thence in Greece and Macedonian tracts,  
‘ (While winter gives us peace) new strength acquire  
‘ For coming conflicts.’ They obey his words  
And loose their ships and launch upon the main.

But Cæsar’s might, intolerant of peace  
Or lengthy armistice, lest now perchance  
The fates might change their edicts, swift pursued  
The footsteps of his foe. To other men,  
So many cities taken at a blow, 740  
So many strongholds captured, might suffice ;  
And Rome herself, the mistress of the world,  
Lay at his feet, the greatest prize of all.  
Not so with Cæsar : instant on the goal  
He fiercely presses ; thinking nothing done <sup>1</sup>  
While aught remained to do. Now in his grasp  
Lay all Italia ;—but while Magnus stayed  
Upon the utmost shore, his grieving soul  
Deemed all was shared with him. Yet he essayed  
Escape to hinder, and with labour vain 750

<sup>1</sup> ‘ Na thing is done quhil ocht remanys ado.’ Gawin Douglas, Prologue to *Æneid* vii.



Piled in the greedy main gigantic rocks :  
Mountains of earth down to the sandy depths  
Were swallowed by the vortex of the sea ;  
Just as if Eryx and its lofty top  
Were cast into the deep, yet not a speck  
Should mark the watery plain ; or Gaurus huge  
Split from his summit to his base, were plunged  
In fathomless Avernus' stagnant pool.  
'The billows thus unstemmed, 'twas Cæsar's will  
To hew the stately forests and with trees 760  
Enchained to form a rampart. Thus of old  
(If fame be true) the boastful Persian king  
Prepared a way across the rapid strait  
'Twixt Sestos and Abydos, and made one  
The European and the Trojan shores ;  
And marched upon the waters, wind and storm  
Counting as nought, but trusting his emprise  
To one frail bridge, so that his ships might pass  
Through middle Athos. Thus a mighty mole  
Of fallen forests grew upon the waves, 770  
Free until then, and lofty turrets rose,  
And land usurped the entrance to the main.

This when Pompeius saw, with anxious care  
His soul was filled ; yet hoping to regain  
The exit lost, and win a wider world  
Wherein to wage the war, on chosen ships  
He hoists the sails ; these, driven by the wind  
Which filled the bellying sails, not once nor twice  
Scattered the beams asunder ; and at night  
Not seldom engines, worked by stalwart arms, 780  
Flung flaming torches forth. But when the time  
For secret flight was come, no sailor shout  
Rang on the shore, no trumpet marked the hour,  
No clarion called the armament to sea.

Already shone the Virgin in the sky  
Leading the Scorpion in her course, whose claws  
Foretell the rising Sun, when noiseless all  
They cast the vessels loose ; no song was heard  
To greet the anchor wrenched from stubborn sand ;  
No captain's order, when the lofty mast 790  
Was raised, or yards were bent ; a silent crew  
Drew down the sails which hung upon the ropes,  
Nor shook the mighty cables, lest the wind  
Should sound upon them. But the chief, in prayer,  
Thus spake to Fortune : 'Thou whose high decree  
'Has made us exiles from Italia's shores,  
'Grant us at least to leave them.' Yet the fates  
Hardly permitted, for a murmur vast  
Came from the ocean, as the countless keels  
Furrowed the waters, and with ceaseless splash 800  
The parted billows rose again and fell.  
Then were the gates thrown wide ; for with the fates  
The city turned to Cæsar : and the foe,  
Seizing the town, rushed onward by the pier  
That circled in the harbour ; then they knew  
With shame and sorrow that the fleet was gone  
And held the open : and Pompeius' flight  
Gave a poor triumph.

Yet was narrower far  
The channel which gave access to the sea  
Than that Eubœan strait <sup>1</sup> whose waters lave 810  
The shore by Chalcis. Here two ships stuck fast  
Alone, of all the fleet ; the fatal hook  
Grappled their decks and drew them to the land,  
And the first bloodshed of the civil war  
Here left a blush upon the ocean wave.

<sup>1</sup> It seems that the Euripus was bridged over. (Mr. Haskins' note.)

As when the famous ship<sup>1</sup> sought Phasis' stream  
The rocky gates closed in and hardly gripped  
Her flying stern ; then from the empty sea  
The cliffs rebounding to their ancient seat  
Were fixed to move no more. But now the steps 820  
Of morn approaching tinged the eastern sky  
With roseate hues : the Pleiades were dim,  
The wagon of the Charioteer grew pale,  
The planets faded, and the silvery star  
Which ushers in the day, was lost in light.

'Thou, Magnus, hold'st the deep ; yet not the same  
Now are thy fates, as when from every sea  
Thy fleet triumphant swept the pirate pest.  
Tired of thy conquests, Fortune now no more  
Shall smile upon thee. With thy spouse and sons, 830  
Thy household gods, and peoples in thy train,  
Still great in exile, in a distant land  
Thou seek'st thy fated fall ; not that the gods,  
Wishing to rob thee of a Roman grave,  
Decreed the strands of Egypt for thy tomb :  
'Twas Italy they spared, that far away  
Fortune on shores remote might hide her crime,  
And Roman soil be pure of Magnus' blood.

<sup>1</sup> The 'Argo.'

BOOK III  
MASSILIA

Julia appears to Pompeius in a vision, lines 1-45. Cæsar sends Curio to Sicily and Sardinia, and proceeds to Rome, 46-127. The tribune Metellus endeavours to prevent him from seizing the treasure in the Temple of Saturn, 128-193. Catalogue of Pompeius' forces, 194-343. Cæsar marches on Massilia; speech of the citizens, and his reply, 344-426. He blockades the town, 427-451; and cuts down the Grove of the Druids, 452-511. Cæsar leaves for Spain, 512. The fight in the trenches, 512-571. Naval battle; various episodes; victory of Decimus Brutus, 572-841.

## BOOK III

### *MASSILIA*

WITH canvas yielding to the southern wind  
The navy sailed the deep, and every eye  
Gazed on Ionian billows. But the chief  
Turned not his vision from his native shore  
Now left for ever, while the morning mists  
Drew down upon the mountains, and the cliffs  
Faded in distance till his aching sight  
No longer knew them. Then his wearied frame  
Sank in the arms of sleep. But Julia's shape,  
In mournful guise, dread horror on her brow, 10  
Rose through the gaping earth, and from her tomb  
Erect,<sup>1</sup> in form as of a Fury spake :  
'Driven from Elysian fields and from the plains  
'The blest inhabit, when the war began,  
'I dwell in Stygian darkness where abide  
'The souls of all the guilty. There I saw  
'Th' Eumenides with torches in their hands  
'Prepared against thy battles ; and the fleets <sup>2</sup>  
'Which by the ferryman of the flaming stream  
'Were made to bear thy dead : and Hell enlarged 20  
'To hold thy punishments : the sisters three

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'adscenso,' as Francken (Leyden, 1896).

<sup>2</sup> So                    'The rugged Charon fainted,  
And asked a navy, rather than a boat,  
To ferry over the sad world that came.'

(Ben Jonson, 'Catiline,' Act i., scene 1.)



' With busy fingers all their needful task  
 ' Could scarce accomplish, and the threads of fate  
 ' Dropped from their weary hands. With me thy wife,  
 ' Thou, Magnus, leddest happy triumphs home :  
 ' New wedlock brings new luck. Thy concubine,  
 ' Whose star brings all her mighty husbands ill,  
 ' Cornelia, weds in thee a breathing tomb.<sup>1</sup>  
 ' Through wars and oceans let her cling to thee  
 ' So long as I may break thy nightly rest : 30  
 ' No moment left thee for her love, but all  
 ' By night to me, by day to Cæsar given.  
 ' Me not the oblivious banks of Lethe's stream  
 ' Have made forgetful ; and the kings of death  
 ' Have suffered me to join thee ; in mid fight  
 ' I will be with thee, and my haunting ghost  
 ' Remind thee Cæsar's daughter was thy spouse.  
 ' Thy sword kills not our pledges ; civil war  
 ' Shall make thee wholly mine.' She spake and fled.  
 But he, though heaven and hell thus bode defeat, 40  
 More bent on war, with mind assured of ill,  
 ' Why dread vain phantoms of a dreaming brain ?  
 ' Or nought of sense and feeling to the soul  
 ' Is left by death ; or death itself is nought.'

Now fiery Titan in declining path  
 Dipped to the waves, his bright circumference  
 So much diminished as a growing moon  
 Not yet full circled, or when past the full ;  
 When to the fleet a hospitable coast  
 Gave access, and the ropes in order laid, 50  
 The sailors struck the masts and rowed ashore.

Thus was the fleet set free and rapt from view  
 By favouring breezes. On Italian soil

<sup>1</sup> I take ' tepido busto ' as the dative case ; and as referring to Pompeius, doomed, like Cornelia's former husband, to defeat and death.

Sole lord stood Cæsar : but he found no joy  
In triumph over Magnus—rather grieved  
That thus in safety had his flight been sped.  
Not any gifts of fortune now sufficed  
His fiery spirit ; and no victory won,  
Unless the war was finished with the stroke.  
Then arms he laid aside, in guise of peace  
Seeking the people's favour ; skilled to know  
How to arouse their ire, and how to gain  
The popular love by corn in plenty given.  
Alone through famine cities can be won ;  
By food a tyrant bribes the crowd to cringe ;  
And starving peoples know not how to fear.

60

He orders Curio to stem the waves  
And cross to lands Sicilian, where of old  
Or ocean by a sudden rise o'erwhelmed  
The land, or split the isthmus right in twain,  
Leaving a path for seas. The mighty deep  
There labours ever lest again should meet  
The mountains rent asunder. Nor were left  
Sardinian shores unvisited : each isle  
Is blest with noble harvests which have filled  
More than all else the granaries of Rome,  
And poured their plenty on Hesperia's shores.  
Not even Libya, with its fertile soil,  
Their yield surpasses, when the southern wind  
Gives way to northern and permits the clouds  
To drop their moisture on the teeming earth.  
This ordered, Cæsar leads his legions on,  
Not armed for war, but as in time of peace  
Returning to his home. Ah ! had he come  
With only Gallia conquered and the North,<sup>1</sup>

70

80

<sup>1</sup> It may be remarked that, in B.C. 46, Cæsar, after the battle of Thapsus, celebrated four triumphs : for his victories over the Gauls, Ptolemæus, Pharnaces, and Juba.

What long array of triumph had he brought !  
 What pictured scenes of battle ! how had Rhine  
 And Ocean borne his chains ! How noble Gaul,  
 And Britain's fair-haired chiefs his lofty car  
 Had followed ! Such a triumph had he lost 90  
 By further conquest. Now in silent fear  
 They watched his marching troops, nor joyful towns  
 Poured out their crowds to welcome his return.  
 Yet did the conqueror's proud soul rejoice,  
 Far more than at their love, at such a fear.

Now Anxur's hold was passed, the oozy road  
 That separates the marsh, the grove sublime <sup>1</sup>  
 Where reigns the Scythian goddess, and the path  
 By which men bear the fasces to the feast  
 On Alba's summit. From the height afar— 100  
 Gazing in awe upon the walls of Rome  
 His native city, since the Northern war  
 Unseen, unvisited—thus Cæsar spake :  
 ' Seat of the gods, have men deserted thee,  
 ' Thee, Rome, without a blow ? Then for what town  
 ' Shall men do battle ? Thank the gods, no host  
 ' From Eastern climes has sought Italia's shores  
 ' To wreak its fury ; nor Sarmatian horde  
 ' With northern tribes conjoined ; by Fortune's gift  
 ' This war is civil : else this coward chief 110  
 ' Had been thy ruin.'

Trembling at his feet

He found the city : deadly fire and flame,  
 As from a conqueror ; gods and fanes dispersed ;  
 Such was the measure of their fear, as though  
 His power and wish were one. No festal shout  
 Greeted his march, no feigned acclaim of joy.  
 Scarce had they time for hate. In Phœbus' hall

<sup>1</sup> Near Aricia. (See Book VI., 93.)

Their hiding places left, a crowd appeared  
Of Senators, uncalled, for none could call.  
No Consul there the sacred shrine adorned 120  
Nor Prætor next in rank, and every seat  
Placed for the officers of state was void :  
Cæsar was all ; his private voice was heard ;<sup>1</sup>  
All else were dumb. They sat prepared to vote  
For him a throne or temple ; for themselves  
Or death or exile. Thank the gods that he  
Blushed more to order than did Rome to serve.  
Yet in one breast the spirit of Freedom rose  
Enraged lest force should override the laws ;  
For hot Metellus, when he saw the gates 130  
Of Saturn's temple yielding to the shock,  
With rapid step burst in between the ranks  
Of Cæsar's troops, and stood before the doors  
As yet unopened. 'Tis the love of gold  
Alone that fears not death ; no hand is raised  
For perished laws or violated rights :  
But for this dross, the vilest cause of all,  
Men fight and die. Thus did the Tribune bar  
The victor's road to rapine, and with voice  
Clear ringing spake : ' Save o'er Metellus dead 140  
' This temple opens not ; my sacred blood  
' Shall flow, thou robber, ere the gold be thine.  
' And surely shall the Tribune's power defied  
' Find an avenging god ; this Crassus knew,<sup>2</sup>  
' Who, followed by our curses, sought the war  
' And met disaster on the Parthian plains.  
' All Rome is empty ; draw thy falchion then,  
' Nor fear a crowd to gaze upon the crime.

<sup>1</sup> He held no office at the time.

<sup>2</sup> The tribune Ateius met Crassus as he was setting out from Rome and denounced him with mysterious and ancient curses. (Plut. 'Crassus,' 16.)

'Not from our treasury reward for guilt  
 'Thy hosts shall ravish : other towns are left, 150  
 'And other nations ; seek thy gifts from them ;  
 'Nor drain Rome's peace for spoil : war still is thine.'

Aroused to anger then the victor spake :  
 'Vain is thy hope to fall in noble death ;  
 'Dost reckon Freedom safe with thee for guard ?  
 'With all thine honours, thou of Cæsar's rage  
 'Art little worthy : never shall thy blood  
 'Defile his hand. Time lowest things with high  
 'Confounds not yet so much that, if thy voice  
 'Could save the laws, it were not better far 160  
 'They fell by Cæsar.' Such his lofty words.

But as the Tribune yielded not, his rage  
 Rose yet the more, and at his soldiers' swords  
 One look he cast, forgetting for the time  
 What robe he wore ; but soon Metellus heard  
 These words from Cotta . 'When men bow to power  
 'Freedom of speech is only Freedom's bane,<sup>1</sup>  
 'Whose shade at least survives, if with free will  
 'Thou dost whate'er is bidden thee. For us  
 'Some pardon may be found : a host of ills 170  
 'Compelled submission, and the shame is less  
 'That to have done which could not be refused.  
 'Yield, then, this wealth, the seeds of direful war.  
 'A nation's anger is by losses stirred,  
 'When laws protect it ; but the hungry slave  
 'Brings danger to his master, not himself.'

At this Metellus yielded from the path ;  
 And as the gates rolled backward, echoed loud<sup>2</sup>  
 'The rock Tarpeian, and the temple's depths

<sup>1</sup> That is, the liberty remaining to the people is destroyed by speaking freely to the tyrant.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Dante and applied to the gates of Purgatory. 'Purg.,' ix., 129.



Gave up the treasure which for centuries 180  
 No hand had touched : all that the Punic foe  
 And Perses and Philippos conquered gave,  
 And all the gold which Pyrrhus panic-struck  
 Left when he fled : that gold,<sup>1</sup> the price of Rome,  
 Which yet Fabricius sold not, and the hoard  
 Laid up by saving sires ; the tribute sent  
 By Asia's richest nations ; and the wealth  
 Which conquering Metellus brought from Crete,  
 And Cato <sup>2</sup> bore from distant Cyprus home ;  
 And last, the riches torn from captive kings 190  
 And borne before Pompeius when he came  
 In frequent triumph. Thus was robbed the shrine,  
 And Cæsar first brought poverty to Rome.

Meanwhile all nations of the earth were moved  
 To share in Magnus' fortunes and the war,  
 And in his fated ruin. Græcia sent,  
 Nearest of all, her succours to the host.  
 From Cirrha and Parnassus' double peak  
 And from Amphissa, Phocis sent her youth :  
 From swift Cephissus' fate-declaring stream, 200  
 And Theban Dirce, chiefs Bæotian came :  
 All Pisa mustered and Alphæus' youths,  
<sup>3</sup> Alphæus who in far Sicilian lands  
 Beyond the billows seeks the day again :  
 Arcadian Mænalus, and Œta loved  
 By Hercules, and old Dodona's oaks  
 Are left to silence ; for the sacred train

<sup>1</sup> That is, the gold offered by Pyrrhus, and refused by Fabricius, which, after the final defeat of Pyrrhus, came into the possession of the victors.

<sup>2</sup> See Plutarch, 'Cato,' 34, 39.

<sup>3</sup> It was generally believed that the river Alphæus of the Peloponnesus passed under the sea and reappeared in the fountain of Arethusa at Syracuse. A goblet was said to have been thrown into the river in Greece, and to have reappeared in the Sicilian fountain. See the note in Grote's 'History of Greece,' Edition 1862, vol. ii., p. 8.



With all Epirus rushes to the war.  
 Athens, deserted at the call to arms,  
 Yet found three vessels in Apollo's port 210  
 To prove her triumph o'er the Persian king.  
 Next seek the battle Creta's hundred tribes  
 Beloved of Jove and rivalling the east  
 In skill to wing the arrow from the bow.  
 The walls of Dardan Oricum, the woods  
 Where Athamanians wander, and the banks  
 Of swift Absyrtus foaming to the main  
 Are left forsaken. Enchelæan tribes  
 Whose king was Cadmus, and whose name records  
 His transformation,<sup>1</sup> join the host ; and those 220  
 Who till Penean fields and turn the share  
 Above Iolcos in Thessalian lands.  
 'There first men steeled their hearts to dare the waves<sup>2</sup>  
 And 'gainst the rage of ocean and the storm  
 To match their strength, when the rude Argo sailed  
 Upon that distant quest, and spurned the shore,  
 Joining remotest nations in her flight,  
 And gave the fates another form of death.  
 Left too was Pholoë ; pretended home  
 Where dwelt the fabled race of double form ;<sup>3</sup> 230  
 Arcadian Mænalus ; the Thracian mount  
 Named Hæmus ; Strymon, whence, as autumn falls,  
 Winged squadrons seek the banks of warmer Nile ;  
 And all those isles the mouths of Ister bathe  
 Mixed with the tidal wave ; the land through which  
 The cooling eddies of Cæicus flow  
 Idalian ; and Arisbe bare of glebe.  
 The hinds of Pitane, and those who till

<sup>1</sup> As a serpent. ἔγχελος is the Greek word for serpent.

<sup>2</sup> Conf. Book VI., 472.

<sup>3</sup> The Centaurs.

Celænæ's fields which mourned of yore the gift  
 Of Pallas,<sup>1</sup> and the vengeance of the god, 240  
 All draw the sword ; and those from Marsyas' flood  
 First swift, then doubling backwards with the stream  
 Of sinuous Meander : and from where  
 Earth gives Pactolus and his golden store  
 Free passage forth ; and where with rival wealth  
 Rich Hermus parts the meads. Nor stayed the bands  
 Of Troy, but (doomed as in old time) they joined  
 Pompeius' fated camp : nor held them back  
 The fabled past, nor Cæsar's claimed descent  
 From their Iulus. Syrian peoples came 250  
 From palmy Idumea and the walls  
 Of Ninus great of yore ; from windy plains  
 Of far Damascus and from Gaza's hold,  
 From Sidon's courts enriched with purple dye,  
 And Tyre oft trembling with the shaken earth.  
 All these led on by Cynosura's light <sup>2</sup>  
 Furrow their certain path to reach the war.

Phœnicians first (if story be believed)  
 Dared to record in characters ; for yet  
 Papyrus was not fashioned, and the priests 260  
 Of Memphis, carving symbols upon walls  
 Of mystic sense (in shape of beast or fowl)  
 Preserved the secrets of their magic art.

Next Persean Tarsus and high Taurus' groves  
 Are left deserted, and Corycium's cave ;

<sup>1</sup> Probably the flute thrown away by Pallas, which Marsyas picked up when he challenged Apollo to a musical contest. For his presumption the god had him flayed alive.

<sup>2</sup> That is, the Little Bear, by which the Phœnicians steered, while the Greeks steered by the Great Bear. (See Sir G. Lewis's 'Astronomy of the Ancients,' p, 447.) In Book VIII., line 198, the pilot declares that he steers by the pole star itself, which is much nearer to the Little than to the Great Bear, and is (I believe) reckoned as one of the stars forming the group known by that name. He may have been a Phœnician.

And all Cilicia's ports, pirate no more,  
 Resound with preparation. Nor the East  
 Refused the call, where furthest Ganges dares,  
 Alone of rivers, to discharge his stream  
 Against the sun opposing ; on this shore <sup>1</sup> 270  
 The Macedonian conqueror stayed his foot  
 And found the world his victor ; Indus rolls  
 Here his vast torrent, by Hydaspes joined  
 Yet scarce augmented ; here from luscious reed  
 Men draw sweet liquor ; here they dye their locks  
 With tints of saffron, and with coloured gems  
 Bind down their flowing garments ; here are they,  
 Who satiate of life and proud to die,  
 Ascend the blazing pyre, and conquering fate,  
 Scorn to live longer ; but triumphant give 280  
 The remnant of their days in flame to heaven.<sup>2</sup>

Nor failed to join the host a hardy band  
 Of Cappadocians, tilling now the soil,  
 Once pirates of the main : nor those who dwell  
 Where steep Niphates hurls the avalanche,  
 And where on Median Coatra's sides  
 The giant forest rises to the sky.  
 And you, Arabians, from your distant home  
 Came to a world unknown, and wondering saw  
 The shadows fall no longer to the left.<sup>3</sup> 290  
 Then fired with ardour for the Roman war  
 Oretas came, and far Carmania's chiefs,  
 Whose clime lies southward, yet men thence desery

<sup>1</sup> He did not in fact reach the Ganges, as is well known.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps in allusion to the embassy from India to Augustus in B.C. 19, when Zarmanochanus, an Indian sage, declaring that he had lived in happiness and would not risk the chance of a reverse, burnt himself publicly. (Merivale, chapter xxxiv.)

<sup>3</sup> That is to say, looking towards the west ; meaning that they came from the other side of the equator. (See Book IX., 620.)

Low down the Pole star, and Bootes runs  
Hasting to set, part seen, his nightly course ;  
And Ethiopians from that southern land  
Which lies without the circuit of the stars,  
Did not the Bull with curving hoof advanced  
O'erstep the limit. From that mountain zone  
They came, where rising from a common fount 300  
Euphrates flows and Tigris, and did earth  
Permit, were joined with either name ; but now  
While like th' Egyptian flood Euphrates spreads  
His fertilising water, Tigris first  
Drawn down by earth in covered depths is plunged  
And holds a secret course ; then born again  
Flows on unhindered to the Persian sea.

But warlike Parthia wavered 'twixt the chiefs,  
Content to have made them two <sup>1</sup> ; while Scythia's hordes  
Dipped fresh their darts in poison, whom the stream 310  
Of Bactros bounds and vast Hyrcanian woods.  
Hence springs that rugged nation swift and fierce,  
Descended from the Twins' great charioteer.<sup>2</sup>  
Nor failed Sarmatia, nor the tribes that dwell  
By richest Phasis, and on Halys' banks,  
Which sealed the doom of Cræsus king ; nor where  
From far Rhipæan ranges Tanais flows,  
On either hand a quarter of the world,  
Asia and Europe, and in winding course  
Carves out a continent ; nor where the strait 320  
In boiling surge pours to the Pontic deep  
Mæotis' waters, rivalling the pride  
Of those Herculean pillar-gates that guard  
The entrance to an ocean. Thence with hair

<sup>1</sup> See Book I., 120.

<sup>2</sup> A race called Heniochi, said to be descended from the charioteer of Castor and Pollux.

In golden fillets, Arimaspians came,  
And fierce Massagetæ, who quaff the blood  
Of the brave steed on which they fight and flee.

Not when great Cyrus on Memnonian realms  
His warriors poured ; nor when, their weapons piled,<sup>1</sup>  
The Persian told the number of his host ; 330  
Nor when th' avenger<sup>2</sup> of a brother's shame  
Loaded the billows with his mighty fleet,  
Beneath one chief so many kings made war ;  
Nor e'er met nations varied thus in garb  
And thus in language. To Pompeius' death  
Thus Fortune called them : and a world in arms  
Witnessed his ruin. From where Afric's god,  
Two-hornèd Ammon, rears his temple, came  
All Libya ceaseless, from the wastes that touch  
The bounds of Egypt to the shore that meets 340  
The Western Ocean. Thus, to award the prize  
Of Empire at one blow, Pharsalia brought  
'Neath Cæsar's conquering hand the banded world.

Now Cæsar left the walls of trembling Rome  
And swift across the cloudy Alpine tops  
He winged his march ; but while all others fled  
Far from his path, in terror of his name,  
Phocæa's<sup>3</sup> manhood with un-Grecian faith

<sup>1</sup> 'Effusis telis.' I have so taken this difficult expression. Herodotus (7, 60) says the men were numbered in ten thousands by being packed close together and having a circle drawn round them. After the first ten thousand had been so measured a fence was put where the circle had been, and the subsequent ten thousands were driven into the enclosure. It is not unlikely that they piled their weapons before being so measured, and Lucan's account would then be made to agree with that of Herodotus. Francken, on the other hand, quotes a Scholiast, who says that each hundredth man shot off an arrow. See Mr. J. A. R. Munro's paper in vol. xxii. of the Hellenic Society's publications, at p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Agamemnon.

<sup>3</sup> Massilia (Marseilles) was founded from Phocæa in Asia Minor about 600 B.C. Lucan (line 392) appears to think that the founders were fugitives



Held to their pledged obedience, and dared  
 To follow right, not fate ; but first of all 350  
 With olive boughs of truce before them borne  
 The chieftain they approach, with peaceful words  
 In hope to alter his unbending will  
 And tame his fury. ‘ Search the ancient books  
 ‘ Which chronicle the deeds of Latian fame ;  
 ‘ Thou’lt ever find, when foreign foes pressed hard,  
 ‘ Massilia’s prowess on the side of Rome.<sup>1</sup>  
 ‘ And now, if triumphs in an unknown world  
 ‘ Thou seekest, Cæsar, here our arms and swords  
 ‘ Accept in aid : but if, in impious strife 360  
 ‘ Of civil discord, with a Roman foe  
 ‘ Thou arm’st for battle, tears we give thee then  
 ‘ And hold aloof : no stranger hand may touch  
 ‘ Celestial wounds. Should all Olympus’ hosts  
 ‘ Have rushed to war, or should the giant brood  
 ‘ Assault the stars, yet men would not presume  
 ‘ Or by their prayers or arms to help the gods :  
 ‘ And, ignorant of the fortunes of the sky,  
 ‘ Taught by the thunderbolts alone, would know  
 ‘ That Jupiter supreme still held the throne. 370  
 ‘ Add that unnumbered nations join the fray :  
 ‘ Nor shrinks the world so much from taint of crime  
 ‘ That civil wars reluctant swords require.  
 ‘ But grant that strangers shun thy destinies  
 ‘ And only Romans fight—shall not the son  
 ‘ Shrink ere he strike his father ? on both sides  
 ‘ Brothers forbid the weapon to be hurled ?  
 ‘ The world’s end comes when other hands are armed

from their city when it was stormed by the Persians sixty years later. See Thucydides I., 13 ; Grote, ‘ History of Greece,’ chapter xxii.

<sup>1</sup> After the burning of Rome by the Celts a collection was made in Massilia in aid of those who suffered by the fire. Mommsen, vol. i., p. 430.



- ‘Than those which custom and the gods allow.  
 ‘For us, this is our prayer : Leave, Cæsar, here 380  
 ‘Thy dreadful eagles, keep thy hostile signs  
 ‘Back from our gates, but enter thou in peace  
 ‘Massilia’s ramparts ; let our city rest  
 ‘Withdrawn from crime, to Magnus and to thee  
 ‘Safe : and should favouring fate preserve our walls  
 ‘Inviolatè, when both shall wish for peace  
 ‘Here meet unarmed. Why hither dost thou turn  
 ‘Thy rapid march, when to Iberian fights  
 ‘The war commands thee ? Weight nor power have we  
 ‘To sway the mighty conflicts of the world. 390  
 ‘We boast no victories since our fatherland  
 ‘We left in exile : when Phocæa’s fort  
 ‘Perished in flames, we sought another here ;  
 ‘And here on foreign shores, in narrow bounds  
 ‘Confined and safe, our boast is sturdy faith ;  
 ‘Nought else. But if our city to blockade  
 ‘Is now thy mind—to force the gates, and hurl  
 ‘Javelin and blazing torch upon our homes—  
 ‘Do what thou wilt : cut off the source that fills  
 ‘Our foaming river, force us, prone in thirst, 400  
 ‘To dig the earth and lap the scanty pool ;  
 ‘Seize on our corn and leave us food abhorred :  
 ‘This people shall not shun, for freedom’s sake,  
 ‘The ills Saguntum bore in Punic siege ;<sup>1</sup>  
 ‘Torn, vainly clinging, from the shrunken breast  
 ‘The starving babe shall perish in the flames.  
 ‘Wives at their husbands’ hands shall pray their fate,  
 ‘And brothers’ weapons deal a mutual death.  
 ‘Such be our civil war ; not, Cæsar, thine.’  
 But Cæsar’s visage stern betrayed his ire 410

<sup>1</sup> Murviedro of the present day. Its gallant defence against Hannibal has been compared to that of Saragossa against the French.

Which thus broke forth in words : ‘ Vain is the hope  
‘ Ye rest upon my march : speed though I may  
‘ Towards my western goal, time still remains  
‘ To blot Massilia out. Rejoice, my troops !  
‘ Unsought the war ye longed for meets you now :  
‘ The fates concede it. As the tempests lose  
‘ Their strength by sturdy forests unopposed,  
‘ And as the fire that finds no fuel dies,  
‘ Even so to find no foe is Cæsar’s ill.  
‘ When those who may be conquered will not fight, 420  
‘ That is defeat. Degenerate, disarmed  
‘ Their gates admit me ! Not content, forsooth,  
‘ With shutting Cæsar out they shut him in !  
‘ They shun the taint of war ! Such prayer for peace  
‘ Brings with it chastisement. In Cæsar’s age  
‘ Learn that not peace, but war within his ranks  
‘ Alone can make you safe.’

He turns his march

Upon the fearless city, and beholds  
Fast barred the gate-ways, while in arms the youths  
Stand on the battlements. Hard by the walls 430  
A hillock rose, upon the further side  
Expanding in a plain of gentle slope,  
Fit (as he deemed it) for a camp with ditch  
And mound encircling. To a lofty height  
The nearest portion of the city rose,  
While intervening valleys lay between.  
These summits with a mighty trench to bind  
The chief resolves, gigantic though the toil.  
But first, from furthest boundaries of his camp,  
Enclosing streams and meadows, to the sea 440  
To draw a rampart, upon either hand  
Heaved up with earthy sod ; with lofty towers  
Crowned ; and to shut Massilia from the land.

Then did the Grecian city win renown  
Eternal, deathless, for that uncompelled  
Nor fearing for herself, but free to act  
She made the conqueror pause : and he who seized  
All in resistless course found here delay :  
And Fortune, hastening to lay the world  
Low at her favourite's feet, was forced to stay 450  
For these few moments her impatient hand.

Now fell the forests far and wide, despoiled  
Of all their giant trunks : for as the mound  
On earth and brushwood stood, a timber frame  
Held firm the soil, lest pressed beneath its towers  
The mass might topple down. There stood a grove  
Which from the earliest time no hand of man  
Had dared to violate ; hidden from the sun <sup>1</sup>  
Its chill recesses ; matted boughs entwined  
Prisoned the air within. No sylvan nymphs 460  
Here found a home, nor Pan, but savage rites  
And barbarous worship, altars horrible  
On massive stones upreared ; sacred with blood  
Of men was every tree. If faith be given  
To ancient myth, no fowl has ever dared  
To rest upon those branches, and no beast  
Has made his lair beneath : no tempest falls,  
Nor lightnings flash upon it from the cloud.  
Stagnant the air, unmoving, yet the leaves  
Filled with mysterious trembling ; dripped the  
streams 470

From coal-black fountains ; effigies of gods  
Rude, scarcely fashioned from some fallen trunk  
Held the mid space : and, pallid with decay,  
Their rotting shapes struck terror. Thus do men  
Dread most the god unknown. 'Twas said that caves

<sup>1</sup> See note to Book I., 508.

Rumbled with earthquakes, that the prostrate yew  
 Rose up again ; that fiery tongues of flame  
 Gleamed in the forest depths, yet were the trees  
 Unkindled ; and that snakes in frequent folds  
 Were coiled around the trunks. Men flee the spot 480  
 Nor dare to worship near : and e'en the priest  
 Or when bright Phœbus holds the height, or when  
 Dark night controls the heavens, in anxious dread  
 Draws near the grove and fears to find its lord.

Spared in the former war, still dense it rose  
 Where all the hills were bare, and Cæsar now  
 Its fall commanded. But the brawny arms  
 Which swayed the axes trembled, and the men,  
 Awed by the sacred grove's dark majesty,  
 Held back the blow they thought would be returned. 490  
 This Cæsar saw, and swift within his grasp  
 Uprose a ponderous axe, which downward fell  
 Cleaving a mighty oak that towered to heaven,  
 While thus he spake : ' Henceforth let no man dread  
 ' To fell this forest : all the crime is mine.  
 ' This be your creed.' He spake, and all obeyed,  
 For Cæsar's ire weighed down the wrath of Heaven.  
 Yet ceased they not to fear. Then first the oak,  
 Dodona's ancient boast ; the knotty holm ;  
 The cypress, witness of patrician grief, 500  
 The buoyant alder, laid their foliage low  
 Admitting day ; though scarcely through the stems  
 Their fall found passage. At the sight the Gauls  
 Grieved ; but the garrison within the walls  
 Rejoiced : for thus shall men insult the gods  
 And find no punishment ? Yet fortune oft  
 Protects the guilty ; on the poor alone  
 The gods can vent their ire. Enough hewn down,  
 They seize the country wagons ; and the hind,

His oxen gone which else had drawn the plough, 510  
Mourns for his harvest.

But the eager chief  
Impatient of the combat by the walls  
Carries the warfare to the furthest west.

Meanwhile a giant mound, on star-shaped wheels  
Concealed, they fashion, crowned with double towers  
High as the battlements, by cause unseen  
Slow creeping onwards ; while amazed the foe  
Beheld, and thought some subterranean gust  
Had burst the caverns of the earth and forced  
The nodding pile aloft, and wondered sore 520  
Their walls should stand unshaken. From its height  
Hisssed down the weapons ; but the Grecian bolts  
With greater force were on the Romans hurled ;  
Nor by the arm unaided, for the lance  
Urged by the catapult resistless rushed  
Through arms and shield and flesh, and left a death  
Behind, nor stayed its course : and massive stones  
Cast by the beams of mighty engines fell ;  
As from the mountain top some time-worn rock  
At length by winds dislodged, in all its track 530  
Spreads ruin vast : nor crushed the life alone  
Forth from the body, but dispersed the limbs  
In fragments undistinguished and in blood.  
But as protected by the armour shield  
The might of Rome drew nigh beneath the wall  
(The front rank with their bucklers interlaced  
And held above their helms), the missiles fell  
Behind their backs, nor could the toiling Greeks  
Deflect their engines, throwing still the bolts  
Far into space ; but from the rampart top 540  
Flung ponderous masses down. Long as the shields  
Held firm together, like to hail that falls



Harmless upon a roof, so long the stones  
 Crushed down innocuous ; but as the blows  
 Rained fierce and ceaseless and the Romans tired,  
 Some here and there sank fainting. Next the roof  
 Moves on with earth besprinkled : underneath  
 The ram conceals his head, which, poised and swung,  
 They dash with mighty force upon the wall,  
 Covered themselves with mantlets. Though the head 550  
 Light on the lower stones, yet as the shock  
 Falls and refalls, from battlement to base  
 The rampart soon shall topple. But by balks  
 And rocky fragments overwhelmed, and flames,  
 The roof at length gives way ; and worn with toil  
 All spent in vain, the wearied troops withdraw  
 And seek the shelter of their tents again.

Thus far to hold their battlements was all  
 The Greeks had hoped ; now, venturing attack,  
 With glittering torches for their arms, by night 560  
 Fearless they sallied forth : nor lance they bear  
 Nor deadly bow, nor shaft ; for fire alone  
 Is now their weapon. Through the Roman works  
 Driven by the wind the conflagration spread :  
 Nor did the newness of the wood make pause  
 The fury of the flames, which, fed afresh  
 By living torches, 'neath a smoky pall  
 Leaped on in fiery tongues. Not wood alone  
 But stones gigantic crumbling into dust  
 Dissolved beneath the heat ; the mighty mound 570  
 Lay prone, yet in its ruin larger seemed.

Next, conquered on the land, upon the main  
 They try their fortunes. On their simple craft  
 No painted figure-head adorned the bows  
 Nor claimed protection from the gods ; but rude,  
 Just as they fell upon their mountain homes,



The trees were knit together, and the deck  
Gave steady foot-hold for an ocean fight.

Meanwhile had Cæsar's squadron left the Rhone  
And reached with Brutus' <sup>1</sup> turret ship the strait 580  
By Stœchas' <sup>2</sup> isles. Nor less the Grecian host—  
Boys not yet grown to war, and aged men,  
Armed for the conflict, with their all at stake.  
Nor only did they marshal for the fight  
Ships meet for service; but their ancient keels  
Brought from the dockyards. When the morning rays  
Broke from the waters, and the sky was clear,  
And all the winds were still upon the deep,  
Smoothed for the battle, swift on either part  
The fleets essay the open; and the ships 590  
Tremble beneath the oars that urge them on,  
By sinewy arms impelled. Upon the wings  
That bound the Roman fleet, the larger craft  
With triple and quadruple banks of oars  
Gird in the lesser: so they front the sea;  
While in their rear, shaped as a crescent moon,  
Liburnian galleys follow. Over all  
Towers Brutus' deck prætorian. Oars on oars  
Propel the bulky vessel through the main,  
Six ranks; the topmost strike the waves afar. 600  
When such a space remained between the fleets  
As could be covered by a single stroke,  
Innumerable voices rise in air  
Drowning with resonant din the beat of oars  
And note of trumpet summoning: and all  
Sit on the benches and with mighty stroke

<sup>1</sup> This was Decimus Brutus, an able and trusted lieutenant of Cæsar, who made him one of his heirs in the second degree. He, however, joined the conspiracy, and it was he who on the day of the murder induced Cæsar to go to the Senate House. Less than two years later, after the siege of Perusia, he was deserted by his army, taken and put to death.

<sup>2</sup> Near Toulon, and now called the Îles d'Hyères.

Sweep o'er the sea and gain the space between.  
Then crashed the prows together, and the keels  
Rebounded backwards, and unnumbered darts  
Or darkened all the sky or, in their fall, 610  
The vacant ocean. As the wings grew wide,  
Less densely packed the fleet, some Grecian ships  
Pressed in between; as when with west and east  
The tide contends, this way the waves are driven  
And that the sea; so as they plough the deep  
In various lines converging, what the prow  
Throws up advancing, from the foemen's oars  
Falls back repelled. But soon the Grecian fleet  
Was handier found in battle, and in flight  
Pretended, and in shorter curves could round; 620  
More deftly governed by the guiding helm:  
While on the Roman side their steadier keels  
Gave vantage, as to men who fight on land.  
Then Brutus to the pilot of his ship:  
'Dost suffer them to range the wider deep,  
'Contending with the foe in naval skill?  
'Draw close the war and drive us on the prows  
'Of these Phocæans.' Him the pilot heard;  
And turned his vessel slantwise to the foe.  
Then was the sea all covered with the war: 630  
Then Grecian ships attacking Brutus found  
Their ruin in the stroke, and vanquished lay  
Beside his bulwarks; with curved hooks and chains  
The foe they grapple, by entangled oars  
Themselves held back. And now no outstretched arm  
Hurls forth the javelin, but sword in hand  
They wage a naval fight: each from his ship  
Leans forward to the stroke, and falls when slain  
Upon a foeman's deck. Deep flows the stream  
Of purple slaughter to the foamy main: 640

By piles of floating corpses are the sides,  
Though grappled, kept asunder. Some, half dead,  
Plunge in the ocean, gulping down the brine  
En crimsoned with their blood ; some lingering still  
Draw their last struggling breath amid the wreck  
Of broken navies : weapons which have missed  
Find yet their victims, and the falling steel  
Fails not in middle deep to deal the wound.  
One vessel circled by Phocæan keels  
Divides her strength, and on the right and left 650  
On either side with equal war contends ;  
On whose high poop while Tagus fighting gripped  
The stern Phocæan, pierced his back and breast  
Two fatal weapons ; in the midst the steel  
Met, and the blood, uncertain whence to flow,  
Stood still, arrested, till with double course  
Forth by a sudden gush it drove each dart,  
And sent the life abroad through either wound.

Here fated Telon also steered his ship :  
No pilot's hand upon an angry sea 660  
More deftly ruled a vessel. Well he knew,  
Or by the sun or crescent moon, how best  
To set his canvas fitted for the breeze  
The coming hours would bring. His rushing stem  
Shattered a Roman vessel : but a dart  
Hurled at the moment quivered in his breast.  
He falls, and in the fall his dying hand  
Diverts the prow. Then Gyareus, in act  
To climb the friendly deck, by javelin pierced,  
Still as he hung, by the retaining steel 670  
Fast to the side was nailed.

Twin brethren stand  
A fruitful mother's pride ; with different fates,  
But ne'er distinguished till death's savage hand

Struck once, and ended error : he that lived,  
Cause of fresh anguish to their sorrowing souls,  
Called ever to the weeping parents back  
The image of the lost : who, as the oars  
Grecian and Roman mixed their teeth oblique,  
Grasped with his dexter hand the Roman ship ;  
When fell a blow that shore his arm away. 680  
So died, upon the side it held, the hand,  
Nor loosed its grasp in death. Yet with the wound  
His noble courage rose, and maimed he dared  
Renew the fray, and stretched across the sea  
To grasp the lost—in vain ! another blow  
Lopped arm and hand alike. Nor shield nor sword  
Henceforth are his. Yet even now he seeks  
No sheltering hold, but with his chest advanced  
Before his brother armed, he claims the fight,  
And holding in his breast the darts which else 690  
Had slain his comrades, pierced with countless spears,  
He falls in death well earned ; yet ere his end  
Collects his parting life, and all his strength  
Strains to the utmost and with failing limbs  
Leaps on the foeman's deck ; by weight alone  
Injurious ; for streaming down with gore  
And piled on high with corpses, while her sides  
Sounded to ceaseless blows, the fated ship  
Let in the greedy brine until her ways  
Were level with the waters—then she plunged 700  
In whirling eddies downwards—and the main  
First parted, then closed in upon its prey.

Full many wondrous deaths, with fates diverse,  
Upon the sea in that day's fight befell.  
Caught by a grappling-hook that missed the side,  
Had Lycidas been whelmed in middle deep ;  
But by his feet his comrades dragged him back,

And rent in twain he hung ; nor slowly flowed  
As from a wound the blood ; but all his veins <sup>1</sup>  
Were torn asunder and the stream of life 710  
Gushed o'er his limbs till lost amid the waves.  
From no man dying has the vital breath  
Rushed by so wide a path ; the lower trunk  
Succumbed to death, but with the lungs and heart  
Long strove the fates, and hardly won the whole.

While, bent upon the fight, an eager crew  
Were gathered to the margin of their deck  
(Leaving the upper side as bare of foes),  
Their ship was overset. Beneath the keel  
Which floated upwards, prisoned in the sea, 720  
And powerless by spread of arms to float  
The main, they perished. One who haply swam  
Amid the battle, chanced upon a death  
Strange and unheard of ; for two meeting prows  
Transfixed his body. At the double stroke  
Wide yawns his chest ; blood issues from his mouth  
With flesh commingled ; and the brazen beaks  
Resounding clash together, by the bones  
Unhindered : now they part and through the gap  
Swift pours the sea and drags the corse below. 730  
Next, of a shipwrecked crew, the larger part  
Struggling with death upon the waters, reached  
A comrade bark ; but when with elbows raised  
They seized upon the bulwarks and the ship  
Rolled, nor could bear their weight, the ruthless crew  
Hacked off their straining arms ; then maimed they sank  
Below the seething waves, to rise no more.

Now every dart was hurled and every spear,  
The soldier weaponless ; yet their rage found arms :

<sup>1</sup> According to some these were the lines which Lucan recited while bleeding to death ; according to others, those at Book ix., line 948.



One hurls an oar ; another's brawny arm 740  
Tugs at the twisted stern ; or from the seats  
The oarsmen driving, swings a bench in air.  
The ships are broken for the fight. They seize  
The fallen dead and snatch the sword that slew.  
Nay, many from their wounds, frenzied for arms,  
Pluck forth the deadly steel, and pressing still  
Upon their yawning sides, hurl forth the spear  
Back to the hostile ranks from which it came ;  
Then ebbs their life blood forth.

But deadlier yet

Was that fell force most hostile to the sea ; 750  
For, thrown in torches and in sulphurous bolts  
Fire all-consuming ran among the ships,  
Whose oily timbers soaked in pitch and wax  
Inflammable, gave welcome to the flames.  
Nor could the waves prevail against the blaze  
Which claimed as for its own the fragments borne  
Upon the waters. Lo ! on burning plank  
One hardly 'scapes destruction ; one to save  
His flaming ship, gives entrance to the main.  
Of all the forms of death each fears the one 760  
That brings immediate dying : yet quail not  
Their hearts in shipwreck : from the waves they pluck  
The fallen darts and furnishing the ships  
Essay the feeble stroke ; and should that hope  
Still fail their hand, they call the sea to aid  
And seizing in their grasp some floating foe  
Drag him to mutual death.

But on that day

Phoceus above all others proved his skill.  
Well trained was he to dive beneath the main  
And search the waters with unfailing eye ; 770  
And should an anchor 'gainst the straining rope



Too firmly bite the sands, to wrench it free.  
 Oft in his fatal grasp he seized a foe  
 Nor loosed his grip until the life was gone.  
 Such was his frequent deed ; but this his fate :  
 For rising, victor (as he thought), to air,  
 Full on a keel he struck and found his death.  
 Some, drowning, seized a hostile oar and checked  
 The flying vessel ; not to die in vain,  
 Their single care ; some on their vessel's side  
 Hanging, in death, with wounded frame essayed  
 To check the charging prow.

786

### Tyrrhenus high

Upon the bulwarks of his ship was struck  
 By leaden bolt from Balearic sling  
 Of Lygdamus ; straight through his temples passed  
 The fated missile ; and in streams of blood  
 Forced from their seats his trembling eyeballs fell.  
 Plunged in a darkness as of night, he thought  
 That life had left him ; yet ere long he knew  
 The living vigour of his limbs ; and cried,  
 ' Place me, O friends, as some machine of war  
 ' Straight facing towards the foe ; then shall my darts  
 ' Strike as of old ; and thou, Tyrrhenus, spend  
 ' Thy latest breath, still left, upon the fight :  
 ' So shalt thou play, not wholly dead, the part  
 ' That fits a soldier, and the spear that strikes  
 ' Thy frame, shall miss the living.' Thus he spake,  
 And hurled his javelin, blind, but not in vain ;  
 For Argus, generous youth of noble blood,  
 Below the middle waist received the spear  
 And falling drave it home. His aged sire  
 From furthest portion of the conquered ship  
 Beheld ; than whom in pride of manhood none  
 More brave in battle : now no more he fought,

790

800

Yet did the memory of his prowess stir  
 Phocæan youths to emulate his fame.  
 Oft stumbling o'er the benches the old man hastes  
 To reach his boy, and finds him breathing still.  
 No tear bedewed his cheek ; upon his breast  
 No blow he struck ; but all his frame was stiff, 810  
 His hands outspread : and o'er his eyes there fell  
 A dark impenetrable veil of mist  
 That blotted out the day ; nor could he more  
 Discern his luckless Argus. He, who saw  
 His parent, raising up his drooping head  
 With parted lips and silent features asks  
 A father's latest kiss, a father's hand  
 To close his dying eyes. But soon his sire,  
 Recovering from his swoon, when ruthless grief  
 Possessed his spirit, 'This short space,' he cried, 820  
 'I lose not, which the cruel gods have given,  
 'But die before thee. Grant thy sorrowing sire  
 'Forgiveness that he fled thy last embrace.  
 'Not yet has passed thy life blood from the wound  
 'Nor yet is death upon thee—still thou may'st<sup>1</sup>  
 'Outlive thy parent.' Thus he spake, and seized  
 The reeking sword and drave it to the hilt,  
 Then plunged into the deep, with headlong bound,  
 To anticipate his son : for this he feared  
 A single form of death should not suffice. 830

Now gave the fates their judgment, and in doubt  
 No longer was the war : the Grecian fleet  
 In most part sunk ;—some ships by Romans oared  
 Conveyed the victors home : in headlong flight  
 Some sought the yards for shelter. On the strand  
 What tears of parents for their offspring slain,

<sup>1</sup> It was regarded as the greatest of misfortunes if a child died before his parent.

How wept the mothers ! 'Mid the pile confused  
Ofttimes the wife sought madly for her spouse  
And chose for her last kiss some Roman slain ;  
While wretched fathers by the blazing pyres 840  
Fought for the dead. But Brutus thus at sea  
First gained a triumph for great Cæsar's arms.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was Brutus who gained the naval victory over the Veneti some seven years before ; the first naval fight, that we know of, fought in the Atlantic Ocean.

BOOK IV

CÆSAR IN SPAIN

WAR IN THE ADRIATIC SEA

DEATH OF CURIO

War in Spain; battle at Ilerda between Cæsar and Pompeius' generals, Afranius and Petreius, lines 1-53. Floods and famine, 54-133. At length Cæsar crosses the Sicoris and intercepts the retreat of the Pompeians, 134-190. The troops hold friendly converse, 191-236, but Petreius stops it and massacres the soldiers of Cæsar, 237-290. Cæsar cuts his enemy off from the river, 290-378. Afranius submits, and is dismissed with his troops, 379-454. Antonius is besieged by the Pompeians in Illyria, and tries to escape on three rafts, 455-510, one of which is stopped by a chain, 510-531. The soldiers on board, persuaded by their captain, Volteius, slay each other, 532-649. Curio goes to Africa and lands near Zama, 650. Legend of Antæus and Hercules, 660-749. Curio defeats Varus, 750-812, but is defeated and slain by Juba, 813-901. His character, 902-935.

## BOOK IV

### *CÆSAR IN SPAIN—WAR IN THE ADRIATIC SEA— DEATH OF CURIO*

BUT in the distant regions of the earth  
Fierce Cæsar warring, though in fight he dealt  
No baneful slaughter, hastened on the doom  
To swift fulfilment. There on Magnus' side  
Afranius and Petreius<sup>1</sup> held command,  
Who ruled alternate, and the rampart guard  
Obeyed the standard of each chief in turn.  
There with the Romans in the camp were joined  
Asturians<sup>2</sup> swift, and Vettons lightly armed,  
And Celts who, exiled from their ancient home, 10  
Had joined 'Iberus' to their former name.  
Where the rich soil in gentle slope ascends  
And forms a modest hill, Ilerda<sup>3</sup> stands,  
Founded in ancient days; beside her glides  
Not least of western rivers, Sicoris  
Of placid current, by a mighty arch  
Of stone o'erspanned, which not the winter floods

<sup>1</sup> Both of these generals were able and distinguished officers. Afranius was slain by Cæsar's soldiers after the battle of Thapsus. Petreius, after the same battle, escaped along with Juba; and failing to find a refuge, they challenged each other to fight. Petreius was killed, and Juba, the survivor, put an end to himself.

<sup>2</sup> These are the names of Spanish tribes. The Celtiberi dwelt on the Ebro.

<sup>3</sup> Lerida, on the river Segre, above its junction with the Ebro. Cinga is the modern Cinca, which falls into the Segre (Sicoris).



Shall overwhelm. Upon a rock hard by  
Was Magnus' camp ; but Cæsar's on a hill,  
Rivalling the first ; and in the midst a stream. 20  
Here boundless plains are spread beyond the range  
Of human vision ; Cinga girds them in  
With greedy waves ; forbidden to contend  
With tides of ocean ; for that larger flood  
Who names the land, Iberus, sweeps along  
The lesser stream commingled with his own.

Guiltless of war, the first day saw the hosts  
In long array confronted ; standard rose  
Opposing standard, numberless ; yet none  
Attacked, through shame of strife ; one bloodless day 30  
They gave their country and her broken laws.  
But Cæsar, when from heaven fell the night,  
Drew round a hasty trench ; his foremost rank  
With close array concealing those who wrought.  
Then with the morn he bids them seize the hill  
Which parted from the camp Ilerda's walls,  
And gave them safety. But in fear and shame  
On rushed the foe and seized the vantage ground,  
First in the onset. From the height they held  
Their hopes of conquest ; but to Cæsar's men 40  
Their hearts by courage stirred, and their good swords  
Promised the victory. Burdened up the ridge  
The soldier climbed, and from the opposing steep  
But for his comrade's shield had fallen back ;  
None had the space to hurl the quivering lance  
Upon the foeman : spear and pike made sure  
The failing foothold, and the falchion's edge  
Hewed out their upward path. But Cæsar saw  
Ruin impending, and he bade his horse  
By circuit to the left, with shielded flank, 50  
Hold back the foe. Thus gained his troops retreat,

For none pressed on them ; and the victor chiefs,  
Forced to withdrawal, gained the day in vain.

Henceforth the fitful changes of the year  
Governed the fates and fashioned out the war.  
For stubborn frost still lay upon the land,  
And northern winds, controlling all the sky,  
Prisoned the rain in clouds ; the hills were nipped  
With snow unmelted, and the lower plains

By frosts that fled before the rising sun ;

60

<sup>1</sup> And all the land, there nearer to the sky  
That whelms the stars, was hard and arid grown  
By suns of winter. But when Titan neared  
The Ram, who, backward gazing on the stars,  
Bore perished Helle,<sup>2</sup> and the hours were held  
In balance, and the days again prevailed,  
The earliest faded moon which in the vault  
Hung with uncertain horn, from eastern wind  
Received a fiery radiance ; whose blast

Forced Boreas back : and breaking on the mists

70

Within his regions, to the Occident

Drave all that shroud Arabia and the land

Of Ganges ; all that or by Caurus<sup>3</sup> borne

Bedim the Orient sky, or rising suns

Permit to gather ; pitiless flamed the day

Behind them, while in front the wide expanse

Was driven ; nor on mid earth sank the clouds

Though weighed with vapour. North and south alike

Were showerless, for on Calpe's rock alone

<sup>1</sup> Meaning Spain, lying further to the west than Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Phrixus and Helle, the children of Nephele, were to be sacrificed to Zeus ; but Nephele rescued them, and they rode away through the air on the Ram with the golden fleece. But Helle fell into the sea, which from her was named the Hellespont. (See Book IX., 1125.)

The sun enters Aries about March 20. The Ram is pictured among the constellations with his head averse.

<sup>3</sup> See Book I., 464.

All moisture gathered ; here at last, forbidden 80  
To pass that sea by Zephyr's bounds contained,  
And by the furthest belt <sup>1</sup> of heaven, they pause,  
In masses huge convolved ; the widest breadth  
Of murky air scarce holds them, which divides  
Earth from the heavens ; till pressed by weight of sky  
In densest volume to the earth they pour  
Their cataracts ; no lightning could endure  
Such storm unquenched : though oft athwart the gloom  
Gleamed its pale fire. Meanwhile a watery arch  
Scarce touched with colour, in imperfect shape 90  
Embraced the sky and drank the ocean waves,  
So rendering to the clouds their flood outpoured.

And now the snows which Titan never yet  
Could melt were thawed : the Pyrenæan rocks  
Are wet with flowing ice ; accustomed springs  
Find not discharge ; and from the very banks  
Each stream receives a torrent. Cæsar's arms  
Are shipwrecked on the field, his tottering camp  
Swims on the rising flood ; the trench is filled  
With whirling waters ; and the plain no more 100  
Yields corn or kine ; for those who forage seek,  
Err from the hidden furrow. Famine knocks  
(First herald of o'erwhelming ills to come)  
Pierce at the door ; and while no foe blockades  
The soldier hungers ; fortunes buy not now  
The meanest measure ; yet, alas ! is found  
The fasting peasant, who, in gain of gold,  
Will sell his little all ! And now the hills  
Are seen no more ; rivers in one vast sea

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Heitland's introduction, upon the meaning of the word 'cardo.' The word 'belt' seems fairly to answer to the two great circles or four meridians which he describes. The word occurs again at line 762 ; Book V., 80 ; Book VII., 453. where it is used as meaning a stage of life.

Of whirlpools overwhelmed ; beasts borne away 110  
And sucked beneath the stream ; their rocky dens  
Sweep onwards ; and the torrent's raging force  
Bears back the inflowing ocean. Nor does night  
Acknowledge Phœbus' rise, for all the sky  
Feels her dominion and obscures its face,  
And darkness joins with darkness. Thus doth lie  
The lowest earth beneath the snowy zone  
And never-ending winters, where the sky  
Is starless ever, and no growth of herb  
Sprouts from the frozen earth ; but standing ice 120  
Tempers <sup>1</sup> the stars which in the middle zone  
Kindle their flames. Thus, Father of the world,  
And thou, O trident-god who rul'st the sea  
Second in place, Neptunus, load the air  
With clouds continual ; forbid the tide,  
Once risen, to return : forced by thy waves  
Let rivers backward run in different course,  
Thy shores no longer reaching ; and the earth,  
Shaken, make way for floods. Let Rhine o'erflow  
And Rhone their banks ; let torrents spread afield 130  
Unmeasured waters : melt Rhipæan snows :  
Spread lakes upon the land, and seas profound,  
And snatch the groaning world from civil war.

Thus for a little moment Fortune tried  
Her darling son ; then smiling to his part  
Returned ; and gained her pardon for the past  
By greater gifts to come. For now the air  
Had grown more clear, and Phœbus' warmer rays  
Coped with the flood and scattered all the clouds  
In fleecy masses ; and the reddening east 140  
Proclaimed the coming day ; the land resumed

<sup>1</sup> The idea is that the cold of the poles tempers the heat of the equator.

Its ancient marks ; no more in middle air  
 The moisture hung, but from about the stars  
 Sank to the depths ; the forest glad upreared  
 Its foliage ; hills again emerged to view  
 And 'neath the warmth of day the plains grew firm.

When Sicoris kept his banks, the shallop light  
 Of hoary willow bark they build, which bent  
 On hides of oxen, bears the weight of man  
 And swims the torrent. Thus on sluggish Po 150  
 Venetians float ; and on th' encircling sea <sup>1</sup>  
 Are borne Britannia's nations ; and when Nile  
 Fills all the land, are Memphis' thirsty reeds  
 Shaped into fragile boats that swim his waves.  
 The further bank thus gained, they haste to curve  
 The fallen forest, and to form the arch  
 By which imperious Sicoris shall be spanned.  
 Yet fearing he might rise in wrath anew,  
 Not on the nearest marge they place the beams,  
 But in mid-field. Thus the presumptuous stream 160  
 They tame with chastisement, parting his flood  
 In devious channels out ; and curb his pride.

Petreius, seeing that all things gave way  
 To Cæsar's destiny, leaves Ilerda's steep,  
 His trust no longer in the Roman world ;  
 And seeks for strength amid those distant tribes,  
 Who, loving death, rush in upon the foe,<sup>2</sup>  
 And win their conquests at the point of sword.  
 But in the dawn, when Cæsar saw the camp  
 Stand empty on the hill, 'To arms !' he cries : 170

<sup>1</sup> 'Fuso': either spacious, outspread ; or, poured into the land (referring to the estuaries) as Mr. Haskins prefers ; or, poured round the island. Portable leathern skiffs seem to have been in common use in Cæsar's time in the English Channel. These were the rowing boats of the Gauls. (Mommson, vol. iv., 219.)

<sup>2</sup> Compare Book I., 520.



' No bridge nor ford ; but stem with brawny arms  
 ' The foaming river.' Rushing to the fray  
 They dare the torrent they had feared in flight.  
 Their arms regained, they race until the blood  
 Throbs in their veins anew, and their wet limbs  
 Are warm again. At length the shadows fall  
 Short on the sward, and day is at the height.  
 Then dash the horsemen on, and hold the foe  
 'Twixt flight and battle. In the plain arose  
 Two rocky heights : from each a loftier ridge 180  
 Of hills ranged onwards, sheltering in their midst  
 A hollow vale, whose deep and winding paths  
 Were safe from warfare ; which, when Cæsar saw  
 That if Petreius held, the war must pass  
 To lands remote by savage tribes possessed ;  
 ' Speed on,' he cries, ' and meet their flight in front ;  
 ' Fierce be your frown and battle in your glance :  
 ' No coward's death be theirs ; but as they flee  
 ' Plunge in their breasts the sword.' They seize the pass  
 And place their camp. Short was the span between 190  
 Th' opposing sentinels ; with eager eyes  
 Undimmed by space, they gazed on brothers, sons,  
 Or friends and fathers ; and within their souls  
 They grasped the impious horror of the war.  
 Yet for a little while no voice was heard,  
 For fear restrained ; by waving blade alone  
 Or gesture, spake they ; but their passion grew,  
 And broke all discipline ; and soon they leap  
 The hostile rampart ; every hand outstretched <sup>1</sup>  
 Embraces hand of foeman, palm in palm ; 200

<sup>1</sup> Compare the passage in Tacitus, 'Hist.,' ii., 45, in which the historian describes how the troops of Otho and Vitellius wept over each other after the battle and deplored the miseries of a civil war. 'Victi victoresque in crumâ effusi, sortem civilium armorum miserâ lætitiâ detestantes.'



One calls by name his neighbour, one his host,  
 Another with his schoolmate talks again  
 Of olden studies : he who in the camp  
 Found not a comrade, was no son of Rome.  
 Wet are their arms with tears, and sobs break in  
 Upon their kisses ; each, unstained by blood,  
 Dreads what he might have done. Why beat thy breast ?  
 Why, madman, weep ? The guilt is thine alone  
 To do or to abstain. Dost fear the man  
 Who takes his title to be feared from thee ? 210  
 When Cæsar's trumpets sound the call to arms  
 Heed not the summons ; when thou seest advance  
 His standards, halt. The civil Fury thus  
 Shall fold her wings ; and in a private robe  
 Cæsar shall love his kinsman.

### Holy Love

Who sway'st the universe, whose firm embrace  
 Binds the compacted fabric of the world ;  
 Come, gentle Concord ! these our times <sup>1</sup> do now  
 For good or evil destiny control  
 The coming centuries ! Ah, cruel fate ! 220  
 Now have the people lost their cloak for crime :  
 Their hope of pardon. They have known their kin.  
 Woe for the respite given by the gods  
 Making more black the hideous guilt to come !

Now all was peaceful, and in either camp  
 Sweet converse held the soldiers ; on the grass  
 They place the meal, and pour the mingled cup ;  
 Bright glows the turf upon the friendly fire ;  
 On mutual couch with stories of their fights,  
 They while the sleepless hours in talk away ; 230

<sup>1</sup> ' *Sæcula nostra* ' may refer either to Lucan's own time or to the moment arrived at in the poem ; or it may, as Francken suggests, have a more general meaning.

‘ Where stood the ranks arrayed, from whose right hand  
 ‘ The quivering lance was sped : ’ and while they boast,  
 Or challenge, deeds of prowess in the war,  
 Faith is renewed and trust. Thus envious fate  
 Made worse their doom, and all the crimes to be  
 Grew with their love.

For when Petreius knew

The treaties made, himself and all his camp  
 Sold to the foe, he stirred his guard to work  
 An impious slaughter : the defenceless foe  
 Flung headlong forth : and parted fond embrace 240  
 By stroke of weapon and in streams of blood.  
 And thus in words of wrath, to stir the war :  
 ‘ Of Rome forgetful, to your faith forsworn !  
 ‘ And could ye not with victory gained return,  
 ‘ Restorers of her liberty, to Rome ?  
 ‘ Lose then ! but losing call not Cæsar lord.  
 ‘ While still your swords are yours, with blood to shed  
 ‘ In doubtful battle, while the fates are hid,  
 ‘ Will you like cravens to your master bear  
 ‘ Doomed eagles ? Will you ask upon your knees 250  
 ‘ That Cæsar deign to treat his slaves alike,  
 ‘ And spare, forsooth, like yours, your leaders’ lives ? <sup>1</sup>  
 ‘ Nay ! never shall *our* safety be the price  
 ‘ Of base betrayal ! Not for boon of life  
 ‘ We wage a civil war. This name of peace  
 ‘ Drags us to slavery. Ne’er from depths of earth,  
 ‘ Fain to withdraw her wealth, should toiling men  
 ‘ Draw store of iron ; ne’er entrench a town ;  
 ‘ Ne’er should the war-horse dash into the fray  
 ‘ Nor fleet with turret bulwarks breast the main, 260

<sup>1</sup> ‘ Petenda est ? ’—is it fit that you should beg for the lives of your leaders ? Mr. Haskins says, ‘ *shall* you have to beg for them ? ’ But it means that to do so is the height of disgrace.

' If freedom ever could for peace be sold,  
 ' And tame unsoiled : 'tis true our foes are sworn  
 ' To cursèd crime ; should you whose cause is just,  
 ' And who may hope for pardon in defeat,  
 ' Hold cheap your honour ? Shame upon your peace !  
 ' Thou callest, Magnus, ignorant of fate,  
 ' From all the world thy powers, and dost entreat  
 ' Monarchs of distant realms, while haply here  
 ' *We* in our treaties bargain for thy—life !'

// Thus did he stir their minds and rouse anew 270  
 The love of impious battle. So when beasts  
 Grown strange to forests, long confined in dens,  
 Their fierceness lose, and learn to bear with man ;  
 Once should they taste of blood, their thirsty jaws  
 Swell at the touch, and all the ancient rage  
 Comes back upon them till they hardly spare  
 Their keeper. Thus they rush on every crime :  
 And blows which dealt in blindness of affray  
 Might seem the crimes of chance, or of the gods  
 Wreaking their hate, such recent vows of love 280  
 Made monstrous, horrid. Where they lately spread  
 The mutual couch and banquet, and embraced  
 Some new-found friend, now falls the fatal blow  
 Upon the self-same breast ; and though at first  
 Groaning at the fell chance, they drew the sword ;  
 Hate rises as they strike, the murderous arm  
 Confirms the doubtful will : in dreadful joy  
 Through the wild camp they smote their kinsmen down ;  
 And carnage raged unchecked ; and each man strove,  
 Proud of his crime, before his leader's face 290  
 To prove his shamelessness of guilt.

But thou,  
 Cæsar, though losing of thy best, dost know

The gods do favour thee. Thessalian fields  
Gave thee no better fortune, nor the waves  
That lave Massilia ; nor on Pharos' main  
Didst thou so triumph. By this crime alone  
Thou from this moment of the better cause  
Shalt be the Captain.

Since the troops were stained  
With foulest slaughter thus, their leaders shunned  
All camps with Cæsar's joined, and sought again 300  
Ilerda's lofty walls ; but Cæsar's horse  
Seized on the plain and forced them to the hills  
Reluctant. There by steepest trench shut in,  
He cuts them from the river, nor permits  
Their circling ramparts to enclose a spring.

By this dread path Death trapped his captive prey.  
Which when they knew, fierce anger filled their souls,  
And took the place of fear. They slew the steeds  
Now useless grown, and rushed upon their fate ;  
Hopeless of life and flight. But Cæsar cried : 310  
' Hold back your weapons, soldiers, from the foe,  
' Strike not the breast advancing ; let the war  
' Cost me no blood ; he falls not without price  
' Who with his life-blood challenges the fray.  
' Scorning their own base lives and hating light,  
' To Cæsar's loss they rush upon their death,  
' Nor heed our blows. But let this frenzy pass,  
' This madman onset ; let the wish for death  
' Die in their souls.' Thus to its embers shrank  
The fire within, when battle was denied, 320  
And fainter grew their rage until the night  
Drew down her starry veil and sank the sun.  
Thus keener fights the gladiator whose wound  
Is recent, while the blood within the veins  
Still gives the sinews motion, ere the skin

Shrinks on the bones : but as the victor stands  
His fatal thrust achieved, and points the blade  
Unfaltering, watching for the end, there creeps  
Torpor upon the limbs, the blood congeals  
About the gash, more faintly throbs the heart, 330  
And slowly fading, ebbs the life away.

Raving for water now they dig the plain  
Seeking for hidden fountains, not with spade  
And mattock only searching out the depths,  
But with the sword ; they hack the stony heights,  
In shafts that reach the level of the plain.  
No further flees from light the pallid wretch  
Who tears the bowels of the earth for gold.  
Yet neither riven stones revealed a spring,  
Nor streamlet whispered from its hidden source ; 340  
No water trickled on the gravel bed,  
Nor dripped within the cavern. Worn at length  
With labour huge, they crawl to light again,  
After such toil to fall to thirst and heat  
The readier victims : this was all they won.  
All food they loathe ; and 'gainst their deadly thirst  
Call famine to their aid. Damp clods of earth  
They squeeze upon their mouths with straining hands.  
Where'er on foulest mud some stagnant slime  
Or moisture lies, each dying soldier strives 350  
With dying comrade first to lap the draught,  
Loathsome had life been his. Like beasts they drain  
The swollen udder, and where milk was not,  
They suck the life-blood forth. From herbs and boughs  
Dripping with dew, from tender shoots they press,  
Nay, from the pith of trees, the juice within.

Happy the host that onward marching finds  
Its savage enemy has fouled the wells  
With murderous venom ; hadst thou, Cæsar, cast



The reeking filth of shambles in the stream, 360  
And henbane dire and all the poisonous herbs  
That lurk on Cretan slopes, still had they drunk  
The fatal waters, rather than endure  
Such lingering agony. Their bowels racked  
With torments as of flame ; the swollen tongue  
And jaws now parched and rigid, and the veins ;  
Each laboured breath with anguish from the lungs  
Enfeebled, moistureless, is scarcely drawn,  
And scarce again returned ; and yet agape,  
Their panting mouths suck in the nightly dew ; 370  
They watch for showers from heaven, and in despair  
Gaze on the clouds, whence lately poured a flood.  
Nor were their tortures less that Meroë  
Saw not their sufferings, nor Cancer's zone,  
Nor where the Garamantian turns the soil ;  
But Sicoris and Iberus at their feet,  
Two mighty floods, but far beyond their reach,  
Rolled down in measureless volume to the main.

But now their leaders yield ; Afranius,  
Vanquished, throws down his arms, and leads his  
troops, 380

Now hardly living, to the hostile camp  
Before the victor's feet, and sues for peace.  
Proud is his bearing, and despite of ills,  
His mien majestic, of his triumphs past  
Still mindful in disaster—thus he stands,  
Though suppliant for grace, a leader yet ;  
From fearless heart thus speaking : ‘ Had the fates  
‘ Thrown me before some base ignoble foe,  
‘ Not, Cæsar, thee ; still had this arm fought on  
‘ And snatched my death. Now if I suppliant ask, 390  
‘ ’Tis that I value still the boon of life  
‘ Given by a worthy hand. No party ties



' Roused us to arms against thee ; when the war,  
 ' This civil war, broke out, it found us chiefs ;  
 ' And with our former cause we kept the faith,  
 ' So long as brave men should. The fates' decree  
 ' No longer we withstand. Unto thy will  
 ' We yield the western tribes : the east is thine  
 ' And all the world lies open to thy march.  
 ' Be generous ! blood nor sword nor wearied arm 400  
 ' Thy conquests bought. Thou hast not to forgive  
 ' Aught but thy victory won. Nor ask we much.  
 ' Give us repose ; to lead in peace the life  
 ' Thou shalt bestow ; suppose these armed lines  
 ' Are corpses prostrate on the field of war,  
 ' Ne'er were it meet that thy victorious ranks  
 ' Should mix with ours, the vanquished. Destiny  
 ' Has run for us its course : one boon I beg ;  
 ' Bid not the conquered conquer in thy train.'

Such were his words, and Cæsar's gracious smile 410  
 Granted his prayer, remitting rights that war  
 Gives to the victor. To th' unguarded stream  
 The soldiers speed : prone on the bank they lie  
 And lap the flood or foul the crowded waves.  
 In many a burning throat the sudden draught  
 Poured in too copious, filled the empty veins  
 And choked the breath within : yet left unquenched  
 The burning pest which, though their frames were full,  
 Craved water for itself. Then, nerved once more,  
 Their strength returned. Oh, lavish luxury, 420  
 Contented never with the frugal meal !  
 Oh, greed that searchest over land and sea  
 To furnish forth the banquet ! Pride that joy'st  
 In sumptuous tables ! learn what life requires,  
 How little nature needs ! No ruddy juice  
 Pressed from the vintage in some famous year,

Whose consuls are forgotten, served in cups  
With gold and jewels wrought, restores the spark,  
The failing spark, of life ; but water pure  
And simplest fruits of earth. The flood, the field 430  
Suffice for nature. Ah ! the weary lot  
Of those who war ! But these, their armour laid  
Low at the victor's feet, with lightened breast,  
Secure themselves, no longer dealing death,  
Beset by care no more, seek out their homes.  
What priceless gift in peace had they secured !  
How grieved it now their souls to have poised the dart  
With arm outstretched ; to have felt their raving thirst ;  
And prayed the gods for victory in vain !  
Nay, hard they think the victor's lot, for whom 440  
A thousand risks and battles still remain ;  
If fortune never is to leave his side,  
How often must he triumph ! and how oft  
Pour out his blood where'er great Cæsar leads !  
Happy, thrice happy, he who, when the world  
Is nodding to its ruin, knows the spot  
Where he himself shall, though in ruin, lie !  
No trumpet call shall break his sleep again :  
But in his humble home, with faithful spouse  
And sons unlettered, Fortune leaves him free 450  
From rage of party ; for if life he owes  
To Cæsar, Magnus sometime was his lord.  
Thus happy they alone live on apart,  
Nor hope nor dread the event of civil war.

Not thus did Fortune upon Cæsar smile  
In all the parts of earth ; <sup>1</sup> but 'gainst his arms  
Dared somewhat, where Salona's lengthy waste  
Is laved by Hadria, and Iadar warm

<sup>1</sup> The scene is the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic. Here was Diocletian's palace.

Meets with his waves the breezes of the west.  
There brave Curetæ dwell, whose island home 460  
Is girded by the main ; on whom relied  
Antonius, and, beleaguered by the foe,  
Upon the furthest margin of the shore  
(Safe from all ills but famine) placed his camp.  
But for his steeds the earth no forage gave,  
Nor golden Ceres harvest ; and his troops  
Gnawed the dry herbage of the scanty turf  
Within their rampart lines. But when they knew  
That Basilus was on th' opposing shore  
With friendly force, by novel mode of flight 470  
They aim to reach him. Not the accustomed keel  
They lay, nor build the ship, but shapeless rafts  
Of timbers knit together, strong to bear  
All ponderous weight ; on empty casks beneath  
By tightened chains made firm, in double rows  
Supported ; nor upon the deck were placed  
The oarsmen, to the hostile dart exposed,  
But in a hidden space, by beams concealed.  
And thus the eye amazed beheld the mass  
Move silent on its path across the sea, 480  
By neither sail nor stalwart arm propelled.  
They watch the main until the reflux waves  
Ebb from the growing sands ; then, on the tide  
Receding, launch their vessel ; thus she floats  
With comrades twin : and rises over each  
With quivering battlements a lofty tower.  
Octavius, guardian of Illyrian seas,  
Restrained his swifter keels, and left the rafts  
Free from attack, in hope of larger spoil  
From fresh adventures ; for the peaceful sea 490  
Might tempt them, and their goal in safety reached,  
To dare a second voyage. Round the stag

Thus will the cunning hunter draw a line  
Of tainted feathers poisoning the air ;  
Or spread the mesh, and muzzle in his grasp  
The straining jaws of the Molossian hound,  
And leash the Spartan pack ; nor is the brake  
Trusted to any dog but such as tracks  
The scent with lowered nostrils, and refrains  
From giving tongue the while ; content to mark 500  
By shaking cord the covert of the prey.

Ere long they manned the rafts in eager wish  
To quit the island, when the latest glow  
Still parted day from night. But Magnus' troops,  
Cilician once, taught by their ancient art,  
In fraudulent deceit had left the sea  
To view unguarded ; but with chains unseen  
Fast to Illyrian shores, and hanging loose,  
They blocked the outlet in the waves beneath.  
The leading rafts passed safely, but the third, 510  
Caught by the rope, was drawn beneath the rocks.  
These, hollowed by the sea, in ponderous mass  
O'erhanging, seemed upon the point to fall ;  
And trees made dark the wave. Here oft the main  
Within the deep recess sweeps broken wrecks  
And bodies of the drowned, till ebbing tides  
Return the spoil. Then from the cavernous arch  
Is belched the ocean forth in such turmoil  
Of swirling billows, as excels the rage  
Of that famed whirlpool on Sicilian shores. 520

Here, with Venetian settlers for its load,  
Stood motionless the raft. Octavius' ships  
Gathered around, while foemen on the land  
Filled all the shore. But well the captain knew,  
Volteius, how the secret fraud was planned,  
And tried in vain with sword and steel to burst

The chains that held them ; without hope he fights,  
Uncertain where to avoid or front the foe.  
Caught in the strait they strove as brave men should  
Against opposing hosts ; nor long the fight, 530  
For fallen darkness brought a truce to arms.

Then to his men disheartened and in fear  
Of coming fate Volteius, great of soul,  
Thus spake in tones commanding : ‘ Free no more,  
‘ Save for this little night, consult ye now  
‘ In this last moment, soldiers, how to face  
‘ Your final fortunes. No man’s life is short  
‘ Who can take thought for death, nor is your fame  
‘ Less than a conqueror’s, if with breast advanced  
‘ Ye meet your destined doom. None know how long 540  
‘ The life that waits them. Summon your own fate,  
‘ And equal is your praise, whether the hand  
‘ Quench the last flicker of departing light,  
‘ Or shear the hope of years. But choice to die  
‘ Is thrust not on the mind—we cannot flee ;  
‘ See at our throats, e’en now, our kinsmen’s swords.  
‘ Then choose for death ; desire what fate decrees.  
‘ At least in war’s blind cloud we shall not fall ;  
‘ Nor when the flying weapons hide the day,  
‘ And slaughtered heaps of foemen load the field, 550  
‘ And death is common, and the brave man sinks  
‘ Unknown, inglorious. Us within this ship,  
‘ Seen of both friends and foes, the gods have placed ;  
‘ Both land and sea and island cliffs shall bear,  
‘ From either shore, their witness to our death,  
‘ In which some great and memorable fame  
‘ Thou, Fortune, dost prepare. What glorious deeds  
‘ Of warlike heroism, of noble faith,  
‘ Time’s annals show ! All these shall we surpass.  
‘ True, Cæsar, that to fall upon our swords 560



' For thee is little ; yet beleaguered thus,  
 ' With neither sons nor parents at our sides,  
 ' Shorn of the glory that we might have earned,  
 ' We give thee here the only pledge we may.  
 ' Yet let these hostile thousands fear the souls  
 ' That rage for battle and that welcome death,  
 ' And know us for invincible, and joy  
 ' That no more rafts were stayed. They'll offer terms,  
 ' And tempt us with a base unhonoured life.  
 ' Would that, to give that death which shall be ours 570  
 ' The greater glory, they may bid us hope  
 ' For pardon and for life ! lest when our swords  
 ' Are reeking with our hearts'-blood, they may say  
 ' This was despair of living. Great must be  
 ' The prowess of our end, if in the hosts  
 ' That fight his battles, Cæsar is to mourn  
 ' This little handful lost. For me, should fate  
 ' Grant us retreat—myself would scorn to shun  
 ' The coming onset. Life I cast away,  
 ' The frenzy of the death that comes apace 580  
 ' Controls my being. Those whose end is near  
 ' Alone may know the happiness of death ;  
 ' Which pitying heaven from all else conceals  
 ' That men may bear to live.'<sup>1</sup> His stirring words  
 Warmed his brave comrades' hearts—they who with fear  
 And tearful eyes had looked upon the Wain,  
 Turning his nightly course, now hoped for day,  
 Such precepts deep within them. Nor delayed  
 The sky to dip the stars below the main ;  
 For Phœbus in the Twins his chariot drave 590  
 At noon near Cancer ; and the hours of night <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Sir T. Browne's 'Religio Medici,' i., 44. 'There be many excellent strains in that Poet wherewith his stoical genius hath liberally supplied him.'

<sup>2</sup> That is, night was at its shortest.



Were shortened by the Archer.

When day broke,

'Lo! on the rocks the Istrians; while the sea  
 Swarmed with the galleys and their Grecian fleet  
 All armed for fight: but first the war was stayed  
 And terms proposed: life to the foe they thought  
 Would seem the sweeter, by delay of death  
 Thus granted. But the band devoted stood,  
 Proud of their promised end, life all forsworn,  
 And careless of the fight: no jarring note 600  
 Opposed their high resolve. In numbers few  
 'Gainst foemen numberless by land and sea,  
 They wage the desperate war; then satiate  
 Turn from the foe. And first demanding death  
 Volteius bared his throat. 'What youth,' he cries,  
 'Dares strike me down, and through his captain's wounds  
 'Attest his love for death?' Then through his side  
 Plunge blades uncounted on the moment drawn.  
 He praises all: but him who struck the first  
 Grateful, with dying strength, he does to death. 610  
 They rush together, and without a foe  
 Work all the guilt of battle. Thus of yore,  
 Rose up the glittering Dircean band  
 From seed by Cadmus sown, and fought and died,  
 Dire omen for the brother kings of Thebes.  
 And so in Phasis' fields the sons of earth,  
 Born of the sleepless dragon, all inflamed  
 By magic incantations, with their blood  
 Deluged the monstrous furrow, while the Queen  
 Feared at the spells she wrought. Devoted thus 620  
 To death, they fall, yet in their death itself  
 Less valour show than in the fatal wounds

<sup>1</sup> On this passage see Dean Merivale's remarks, 'History of the Roman Empire,' chapter xvi.

They take and give ; for e'en the dying hand  
Missed not a blow—nor did the stroke alone  
Inflict the wound, but rushing on the sword  
Their throat or breast received it to the hilt ;  
And when by fatal chance or sire with son,  
Or brothers met, yet with unfaltering weight  
Down flashed the pitiless sword : this proved their love,  
To give no second blow. Half living now 630  
They dragged their mangled bodies to the side,  
Whence flowed into the sea a crimson stream  
Of slaughter. 'Twas their pleasure yet to see  
The light they scorned ; with haughty looks to scan  
The faces of their victors, and to feel  
The death approaching. But the raft was now  
Piled up with dead ; which, when the foemen saw,  
Wondering at such a chief and such a deed,  
They gave them burial. Never through the world  
Of any brave achievement was the fame 640  
More widely blazed. Yet meaner men, untaught  
By such examples, see not that the hand  
Which frees from slavery needs no valiant mind  
To guide the stroke. But tyranny is feared  
As dealing death ; and Freedom's self is galled  
By ruthless arms ; and knows not that the sword  
Was given for this, that none need live a slave.  
Ah Death ! wouldst thou but let the coward live  
And grant the brave alone the prize to die !

Nor less were Libyan fields ablaze with war. 650  
For Curio rash from Lilybæan<sup>1</sup> coast  
Sailed with his fleet, and borne by gentle winds  
Betwixt half-ruined Carthage, mighty once,  
And Clupea's cliff, upon the well-known shore  
His anchors dropped. First from the hoary sea

<sup>1</sup> That is, Sicilian.

Remote, where Bagra slowly ploughs the sand,  
 He placed his camp : then sought the further hills  
 And mazy passages of cavernous rocks,  
 Antæus' kingdom called. From ancient days  
 This name was given ; and thus a swain retold 660  
 The story handed down from sire to son :  
 ' Not yet exhausted by the giant brood,  
 ' Earth still another monster brought to birth,  
 ' In Libya's caverns : huger far was he,  
 ' More justly far her pride, than Briareus  
 ' With all his hundred hands, or Typhon fierce,  
 ' Or Tityos : 'twas in mercy to the gods  
 ' That not in Phlegra's<sup>1</sup> fields Antæus grew,  
 ' But here in Libya ; to her offspring's strength,  
 ' Unmeasured, vast, she added yet this boon, 670  
 ' That when in weariness and labour spent  
 ' He touched his parent, fresh from her embrace  
 ' Renewed in vigour he should rise again.  
 ' In yonder cave he dwelt, 'neath yonder rock  
 ' He made his feast on lions slain in chase :  
 ' There slept he ; not on skins of beasts, or leaves,  
 ' But fed his strength upon the naked earth.  
 ' Perished the Libyan hinds and those who came,  
 ' Brought here in ships, until he scorned at length  
 ' The earth that gave him strength, and on his feet 680  
 ' Invincible and with unaided might  
 ' Made all his victims. Last to Afric shores,  
 ' Drawn by the rumour of such carnage, came  
 ' Magnanimous Alcides, he who freed

<sup>1</sup> For Phlegra, the scene of the battle between the giants and the gods, see Book VII., 169, and Book IX., 770. Ben Jonson ('Sejanus,' Act v., scene 10) says of Sejanus :—

' Phlegra, the field where all the sons of earth  
 Mustered against the gods, did ne'er acknowledge  
 So proud and huge a monster.'

‘ Both land and sea of monsters. Down on earth  
‘ He threw his mantle of the lion’s skin  
‘ Slain in Cleone ; nor Antæus less  
‘ Cast down the hide he wore. With shining oil,  
‘ As one who wrestles at Olympia’s feast,  
‘ The hero rubbed his limbs : the giant feared 690  
‘ Lest standing only on his parent earth  
‘ His strength might fail ; and cast o’er all his bulk  
‘ Hot sand in handfuls. Thus with arms entwined  
‘ And grappling hands each seizes on his foe ;  
‘ With hardened muscles straining at the neck  
‘ Long time in vain ; for firm the sinewy throat  
‘ Stood column-like, nor yielded ; so that each  
‘ Wondered to find his peer. Nor at the first  
‘ Divine Alcides put forth all his strength,  
‘ By lengthy struggle wearing out his foe, 700  
‘ Till chilly drops stood on Antæus’ limbs,  
‘ And toppled to its fall the stately throat,  
‘ And smitten by the hero’s blows, the legs  
‘ Began to totter. Breast to breast they strive  
‘ To gain the vantage, till the victor’s arms  
‘ Gird in the giant’s yielding back and sides,  
‘ And squeeze his middle part : next ’twixt the thighs  
‘ He puts his feet, and forcing them apart,  
‘ Lays low the mighty monster limb by limb.  
‘ The dry earth drank his sweat, while in his veins 710  
‘ Warm ran the life-blood, and with strength refreshed,  
‘ The muscles swelled and all the joints grew firm,  
‘ And with his might restored, he breaks his bonds  
‘ And rives the arms of Hercules away.  
‘ Amazed the hero stood at such a strength.  
‘ Not thus he feared, though then unused to war,  
‘ That hydra fierce which, smitten in the marsh  
‘ Of Inachus, renewed its severed heads.

‘ They fought as peers, the giant with the powers  
 ‘ Which earth bestowed, the hero with his own : 720  
 ‘ Nor did the hatred of his step-dame <sup>1</sup> find  
 ‘ In all his conflicts greater room for hope.  
 ‘ She sees bedewed in sweat the neck and limbs  
 ‘ Which once had borne the burden of the heavens  
 ‘ Nor knew the toil : and when Antæus felt  
 ‘ His foeman’s arms close round him once again,  
 ‘ He flung his wearying limbs upon the sand  
 ‘ To rise with strength renewed ; all that the earth,  
 ‘ Though labouring sore, could breathe into her son  
 ‘ She gave his frame. But Hercules at last 730  
 ‘ Saw how his parent gave the giant strength.  
 ‘ “ Stand thou,” he cried ; “ no more upon the ground  
 ‘ “ Thou liest at thy will—here must thou stay  
 ‘ “ Within mine arms constrained ; against this breast,  
 ‘ “ Antæus, shalt thou fall.” He lifted up  
 ‘ And held by middle girth the giant form,  
 ‘ Still struggling for the soil : but she no more  
 ‘ Could give her offspring vigour. Slowly came  
 ‘ The chill of death upon him, and ’twas long  
 ‘ Before the hero, of his victory sure, 740  
 ‘ Trusted the earth and laid the giant down.  
 ‘ Hence, hoar antiquity that loves to prate  
 ‘ And wonders at herself,<sup>2</sup> this region called  
 ‘ Antæus’ kingdom. But a greater name  
 ‘ Yon hills from Scipio gained, when he recalled  
 ‘ From Roman citadels the Punic chief.  
 ‘ Here was his camp ; here canst thou see the trace  
 ‘ Of that most famous rampart <sup>3</sup> whence at length  
 ‘ Issued the Eagles of triumphant Rome.’

But Curio rejoiced, as though for him

750

<sup>1</sup> Juno.

<sup>2</sup> That is, extols ancient deeds.

<sup>3</sup> Referring to the battle of Zama.



The fortunes of the spot must hold in store  
The fates of former chiefs : and on the place  
Of happy augury placed his tents ill-starred ;  
Took from the hills their omens ; and with force  
Unequal, challenged his barbarian foe.

All Africa that bore the Roman yoke  
Then lay 'neath Varus. He, though placing first  
Trust in his Latian troops, from every side  
And furthest regions, summons to his aid  
The nations who confessed King Juba's rule. 760  
Not any monarch over wider tracts  
Held the dominion. From the western belt <sup>1</sup>  
Near Gades, Atlas parts their furthest bounds ;  
But from the southern, Hammon girds them in  
Hard by the whirlpools ; and their burning plains  
Stretch forth unending 'neath the torrid zone,  
In breadth its equal, till they reach at length  
The shore of ocean upon either hand.

From all these regions tribes unnumbered flock  
To Juba's standard : Moors of swarthy hue 770  
As though from Ind ; Numidian nomads there  
And Nasamon's needy hordes ; and those whose darts  
Rival the flying arrows of the Mede :  
Dark Garamantians leave their fervid home ;  
And those whose coursers unrestrained by bit  
Or saddle, yet obey the rider's hand  
Which wields the guiding switch : the hunter, too,  
Who wanders forth, his home a fragile hut,  
And blinds with flowing robe (if spear should fail)  
The angry lion, monarch of the steppe. 780

Not eagerness alone to save the state  
Stirred Juba's spirit : private hatred too  
Roused him to war. For in the former year,

<sup>1</sup> See line 82.



When Curio all things human and the gods<sup>1</sup>  
 Polluted, he by tribune law essayed  
 To ravish Libya from the tyrant's sway,  
 And drive the monarch from his father's throne,  
 While giving Rome a king. To Juba thus,  
 Still smarting at the insult, came the war,  
 A welcome harvest for his crown retained. 790  
 These rumours Curio feared : nor had his troops  
 (Ta'en in Corfinium's hold)<sup>2</sup> in waves of Rhine  
 Been tested, nor to Cæsar in the wars  
 Had learned devotion : wavering in their faith,  
 Their second chief they doubt, their first betrayed.

Yet when the general saw the spirit of fear  
 Creep through his camp, and discipline to fail,  
 And sentinels desert their guard at night,  
 Thus in his fear he spake : ' By daring much  
 ' Fear is disguised ; let me be first in arms, 800  
 ' And bid my soldiers to the plain descend,  
 ' While still *my* soldiers. Idle days breed doubt.  
 ' By fight forestall the plot.<sup>3</sup> Soon as the thirst  
 ' Of bloodshed fills the mind, and eager hands  
 ' Grip firm the sword, and pressed upon the brow  
 ' The helm brings valour to the failing heart—  
 ' Who cares to measure leaders' merits then ?  
 ' Who weighs the cause ? With whom the soldier stands,  
 ' For him he fights ; as at the fatal show  
 ' No ancient grudge the gladiator's arm 810  
 ' Nerves for the combat, yet as he shall strike  
 ' He hates his rival.' Thinking thus he led  
 His troops in battle order to the plain.  
 Then victory on his arms deceptive shone  
 Hiding the ills to come : for from the field

<sup>1</sup> Curio was tribune in B.C. 50. His earlier years are stated to have been stained with vice.

<sup>2</sup> Book II., 535. <sup>3</sup> Preferring the reading '*præripere*,' with Francken.

Driving the hostile host with sword and spear,  
 He smote them till their camp opposed his way.  
 But after Varus' rout, unseen till then,  
 All eager for the glory to be his,  
 By stealth came Juba : silent was his march ; 820  
 His only fear lest rumour should forestall  
 His coming victory. In pretended war  
 He sends Sabura forth with scanty force  
 To tempt the enemy, while in hollow vale  
 He holds the armies of his realm unseen.  
 'Tis thus the sly ichneumon<sup>1</sup> with his tail  
 Waving, allures the serpent of the Nile  
 Drawn to the moving shadow : he, with head  
 Turned sideways, watches till the victim glides  
 Within his reach, then seizes by the throat 830  
 Behind the deadly fangs : forth from its seat  
 Balked of its purpose, through the brimming jaws  
 Gushes a tide of poison. Fortune smiled  
 On Juba's stratagem ; for Curio  
 (The hidden forces of the foe unknown)  
 Sent forth his horse by night without the camp  
 To scour more distant regions. He himself  
 At earliest peep of dawn bids carry forth  
 His standards ; heeding not his captains' prayer  
 Urged on his ears : ' Beware of Punic fraud, 840  
 'The craft that taints a Carthaginian war.'  
 Hung over him the doom of coming death  
 And gave the youth to fate ; and civil strife  
 Dragged down its author.

On the lofty tops

<sup>1</sup> Bewick ('Quadrupeds,' p. 238) tells the following anecdote of a tame ichneumon which had never seen a serpent, and to which he brought a small one. 'Its first emotion seemed to be astonishment mixed with anger ; its hair became erect ; in an instant it slipped behind the reptile, and with remarkable swiftness and agility leaped upon its head, seized it and crushed it with its teeth.'

Where broke the hills abruptly to their fall  
He ranks his troops and sees the foe afar :  
Who still deceiving, simulated flight,  
Till from the height in loose unordered lines  
The Roman forces streamed upon the plain,  
In thought that Juba fled. Then first was known 850  
The treacherous fraud : for swift Numidian horse  
On every side surround them : leader, men—  
All see their fate in one dread moment come.  
No coward flees, no warrior bravely strides  
To meet the battle : nay, the trumpet call  
Stirs not the charger with resounding hoof  
To spurn the rock, nor galling bit compels  
To champ in eagerness ; nor toss his mane  
And prick the ear, nor prancing with his feet  
To claim his share of combat. Tired, the neck 860  
Droops downwards : smoking sweat bedews the limbs :  
Dry from the squalid mouth protrudes the tongue,  
Hoarse, raucous panting issues from their chests ;  
Their flanks distended : and on every curb  
Dry foam of blood ; the ruthless sword alone  
Could move them onward, powerless even then  
To charge ; but giving to the hostile dart  
A nearer victim. But when the Afric horse  
First made their onset, loud beneath their hoofs  
Rang the wide plain, and rose the dust in air 870  
As by some Thracian whirlwind stirred ; and veiled  
The heavens in darkness. When on Curio's host  
The tempest burst, each footman in the rank  
Stood there to meet his fate—no doubtful end  
Hung in the balance : destiny proclaimed  
Death to them all. No conflict hand to hand  
Was granted them, by lances thrown from far  
And sidelong sword-thrusts slain : nor wounds alone,  
But clouds of weapons falling from the air

By weight of iron o'erwhelmed them. Still drew in 880  
The straightening circle, for the first pressed back  
On those behind ; did any shun the foe,  
Seeking the inner safety of the ring,  
He needs must perish by his comrades' swords.  
And as the front rank fell, still narrower grew  
The close crushed phalanx, till to raise their swords  
Space was denied. Still close and closer forced  
The armed breasts against each other driven  
Pressed out the life. Thus not upon a scene  
Such as their fortune promised, gazed the foe. 890  
No tide of blood was there to glut their eyes,  
No members lopped asunder, though the earth  
Was piled with corpses ; for each Roman stood  
In death upright against his comrade dead.

Let cruel Carthage rouse her hated ghosts  
By this fell offering ; let the Punic shades,  
And bloody Hannibal, from this defeat  
Receive atonement : yet 'twas shame, ye gods,  
That Libya gained not for herself the day ;  
And that our Romans on that field should die 900  
To save Pompeius and the Senate's cause.

Now was the dust laid low by streams of blood,  
And Curio, knowing that his host was slain,  
Chose not to live ; and, as a brave man should,  
He rushed upon the heap, and fighting fell.

In vain with turbid speech hast thou profaned  
The pulpit of the forum ; waved in vain  
From that proud <sup>1</sup> citadel the tribune flag :  
And armed the people, and the Senate's rights  
Betraying, hast compelled this impious war 910

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'arce,' not 'arte.' The word 'signifer' seems to favour the reading **I** have preferred ; and Dean Merivale, Hosius, and Francken adopt it.

Betwixt the rival kinsmen. Low thou liest  
 Before Pharsalus' fight, and from thine eyes  
 Is hid the war. 'Tis thus to suffering Rome,  
 For arms seditious and for civil strife  
 Ye mighty make atonement with your blood.  
 Happy were Rome and all her sons indeed,  
 Did but the gods as rigidly protect  
 As they avenge, her violated laws !  
 There Curio lies ; untombed his noble corpse,  
 Torn by the vultures of the Libyan wastes. 920  
 Yet shall we, since such merit, though unsung,  
 Lives by its own imperishable fame,  
 Give thee thy meed of praise. Rome never bore  
 Another son, who, had he right pursued,  
 Had so adorned her laws ; but soon the times,  
 Their luxury, corruption, and the curse  
 Of copious wealth swept o'er his wavering mind  
 In stream transverse ; and, bribed by spoils of Gaul  
 And golden gifts of Cæsar, Curio changed  
 Turned with his change the scale of human things. 930  
 True, mighty Sulla, cruel Marius,  
 And bloody Cinna, and the long descent  
 Of Cæsar and of Cæsar's house became  
 Lords of our lives. But who had power like him ?  
 All others bought the state : he sold alone.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the character and career of Curio, see Merivale's 'History of the Roman Empire,' chapter xvi. He was of profligate character, but a friend and pupil of Cicero ; at first a rabid partisan of the oligarchy, he had, about the period of his tribuneship (B.C. 50-49), become a supporter of Cæsar. How far Gaulish gold was the cause of this conversion we cannot tell. It is in allusion to this change that he was termed the prime mover of the civil war. His arrival in Cæsar's camp is described in Book I., line 306. He became Cæsar's chief lieutenant in place of the deserter Labienus ; and, as described in Book III., was sent to Sardinia and Sicily, whence he expelled the senatorial forces. His final expedition to Africa, defeat and death, form the subject of the latter part of this book. Mommsen describes him as a man of talent, and finds a resemblance between him and Cæsar. (Vol. iv., p. 393.)

BOOK V

THE ORACLE    THE MUTINY  
THE STORM



Meeting of the Senate in Epirus, lines 1-74. Appius consults the Oracle at Delphi. Its history and description, 75-275. Mutiny of Cæsar's troops, 276-300. Speech of the mutineers, 304-345. His reply, 346-432, quelling the mutiny. He returns to Rome, and thence goes to Brundisium, 433-473. And crosses to Epirus, 473-532. He exhorts Antonius to join him, 532-582. He endeavours to cross over in a small boat; the storm, and the return, 583-779. His reception, 780-809. Is joined by Antonius, 810-829. Pompeius parts with Cornelia, whom he sends to Lesbos, 830-936.

## BOOK V

### *THE ORACLE—THE MUTINY—THE STORM*

THUS had the smiles of Fortune and her frowns  
Brought either chief to Macedonian shores  
Still equal to his foe. From cooler skies  
Sank Atlas' <sup>1</sup> daughters down, and Hæmus' slopes  
Were white with winter, and the day drew nigh  
Devoted to the god who leads the months,  
And marking with new names the book of Rome,  
When came the Fathers from their distant posts  
By both the Consuls to Epirus called <sup>2</sup> .  
Ere yet their year was dead : a foreign land  
Obscure received the magistrates of Rome ;  
A senate sojourning in foreign lands  
Held there high questions, not in warlike camp  
But hedged by all the axes of the law ;  
And all men gazing on the reverend ranks  
Knew that no Magnus' party there was met,  
But all the state ; and Magnus was but one.  
Mid silent sadness from his lofty seat

10

Thus spake the Consul : ' If your hearts still beat  
' With Latian blood, and if within your breasts  
' Still lives your fathers' vigour, look not now  
' On this strange land that holds us, nor enquire  
' How far the captured city. Know the face  
' Of your own company ; the rulers you  
' In all that comes. Be this your first decree,

20

<sup>1</sup> The Pleiades, said to be daughters of Atlas.

<sup>2</sup> These were the Consuls for the expiring year, B.C. 49—Caius Marcellus and L. Lentulus Crus.

- ' Whose truth all peoples and all kings confess ;  
 ' Be this the Senate. Let the frozen wain  
 ' Demand your presence, or the torrid zone  
 ' Wherein the day and night with equal tread  
 ' For ever march ; still follows in your steps 30  
 ' The central power of Imperial Rome.  
 ' When flamed the Capitol with fires of Gaul,  
 ' When Veii held Camillus, there with him  
 ' Was Rome, nor ever though it changed its clime  
 ' Your order lost its rights. In Cæsar's hands  
 ' Are sorrowing houses and deserted homes,  
 ' Laws silent for a space, and forums closed  
 ' In public fast. His Senate-house beholds  
 ' Those Fathers only whom from Rome it drove,  
 ' While Rome was full. Of that high order all 40  
 ' Not here, are exiles.<sup>1</sup> Ignorant of war,  
 ' Its crimes and bloodshed, through long years of peace,  
 ' Ye fled its outburst : now in session all  
 ' Are here assembled. See ye how the gods  
 ' Weigh down Italia's loss by all the world  
 ' Thrown in the other scale ? Illyria's wave  
 ' Rolls on our foes : in Libya's arid wastes  
 ' Is fallen their Curio, the weightier part <sup>2</sup>  
 ' Of Cæsar's senate ! Lift your standards, then,  
 ' Spur on your fates and prove your hopes to heaven. 50  
 ' Let Fortune, smiling, give you courage now

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, Cæsar's Senate at Rome could boast of those Senators only whom it had, before Pompeius' flight, declared public enemies. But they were to be regarded as exiles, having lost their rights, rather than the Senators in Epirus, who were in full possession of theirs.

<sup>2</sup> Dean Merivale says that probably Cæsar's Senate was not less numerous than his rival's. Duruy says there were 200 senators in Pompeius' camp, out of a total of between 500 and 600. Mommsen says, 'they were veritably emigrants. This Roman Coblentz presented a pitiful spectacle of the high pretensions and paltry performances of the grandees of Rome.' (Vol. iv., p. 397.) Almost all the Consulars were with Pompeius.

‘ As, when ye fled, your cause. The Consuls’ power  
‘ Fails with the dying year : not so does yours ;  
‘ By your commandment for the common weal  
‘ Decree Pompeius leader.’ With applause  
They heard his words, and placed their country’s fates,  
Nor less their own, within the chieftain’s hands.

Then did they shower on people and on kings  
Honours well earned—Rhodes, Mistress of the Seas,  
Was decked with gifts ; Athena, old in fame, 60  
Received her praise, and the rude tribes who dwell  
On cold Taygetus ; Massilia’s sons  
Their own Phocæa’s freedom ; on the chiefs  
Of Thracian tribes, fit honours were bestowed.  
They order Libya by their high decree  
To serve King Juba’s sceptre ; and, alas !  
On Ptolemæus, of a faithless race  
The faithless sovereign, scandal to the gods,  
And shame to Fortune, placed the diadem  
Of Pella. Boy ! against the common herd 70  
Fierce is thy weapon. Ah, if that were all !  
The fatal gift gave, too, Pompeius’ life ;  
Bereft thy sister of her sire’s bequest,<sup>1</sup>  
Half of the kingdom : Cæsar of a crime.  
Then all to arms. While soldier thus and chief,  
In doubtful sort, against their hidden fate  
Devised their counsel, Appius<sup>2</sup> only feared  
To face the chances of the war, and sought  
Through Phœbus’ ancient oracle to break  
The silence of the gods, and know the end. 80

<sup>1</sup> By the will of Ptolemy Auletes, Cleopatra had been appointed joint sovereign of Egypt with her young brother. Lucan means that Cæsar would have killed Pompeius if young Ptolemy had not done so. She lost her share of the kingdom, and Cæsar was clear of the crime.

<sup>2</sup> Appius was Proconsul, and in command of Achaia, for the Senate.

Between the western belt and that which bounds <sup>1</sup>  
 The furthest east, midway Parnassus rears  
 His double summit : <sup>2</sup> to the Bromian god  
 And Pæan consecrate, to whom conjoined  
 The Theban band leads up the Delphic feast  
 On each third year. This mountain, when the sea  
 Poured o'er the earth her billows, rose alone,  
 By loftiest peak scarce master of the waves,  
 Parting the crest of waters from the stars.  
 There, to avenge his mother, from her home 90  
 Chased by the angered goddess while as yet  
 She bore him quick within her, Pæan came  
 (When Themis ruled the tripods and the spot <sup>3</sup>)  
 And with unpractised darts the Python slew.  
 But when he saw how from the yawning cave  
 A godlike knowledge breathed, and all the air  
 Was full of voices murmured from the depths,  
 He took the shrine and filled the deep recess ;  
 Henceforth a prophet. Which of all the gods  
 Has left heaven's light in this dark cave to hide ? 100  
 What spirit that knows the secrets of the world  
 And things to come, here condescends to dwell,  
 Divine, omnipotent ? bear the touch of man,  
 And at his bidding deigns to lift the veil ?  
 Perchance he sings the fates ; perchance his song,  
 Once sung, is fate. Haply some part of Jove  
 Sent here to rule the earth with mystic power,  
 Balanced upon the void immense of air,

<sup>1</sup> See Book IV., 82.

<sup>2</sup> ' Thus far hath one of steep Parnassus' brows  
 Sufficed me : henceforth there is need of both,  
 For my remaining enterprise.'

Dante, ' Paradise,' i., 16. (Cary.)

<sup>3</sup> Themis, the goddess of law, was in possession of the Delphic oracle, previous to Apollo. (Æsch., ' Eumenides,' line 2.)

Sounds through the caves, and in its flight returns  
 To that high home of thunder whence it came. 110  
 Caught in a virgin's breast, this deity  
 Strikes on the human spirit : then a voice  
 Sounds from her breast, as when the lofty peak  
 Of Etna boils, forced by compelling flames,  
 Or as Typhëus on Campania's shore  
 Frets 'neath the pile of huge Inarimé.<sup>1</sup>

Though free to all that ask, denied to none,  
 No human passion lurks within the voice  
 That heralds forth the god ; no whispered vow,  
 No evil prayer prevails ; none favour gain : 120  
 Of things unchangeable the song divine ;  
 Yet loves the just. When men have left their homes  
 To seek another, it has turned their steps  
 Aright, as with the Tyrians ;<sup>2</sup> and raised  
 The hearts of men to war, as prove the waves  
 Of Salamis :<sup>3</sup> when earth refused her fruits  
 Or plague has filled the air, this voice benign  
 Has given fresh hope and pointed to the end.  
 No gift from heaven's high gods so great as this  
 Our centuries have lost, since Delphi's shrine 130  
 Has silent stood, and kings forbade the gods<sup>4</sup>  
 To speak the future, fearing for their fates.  
 Nor does the priestess sorrow that the voice  
 Is heard no longer ; and the silent fane

<sup>1</sup> The modern isle of Ischia, off the Bay of Naples.

<sup>2</sup> The Tyrians consulted the oracle in consequence of the earthquakes which vexed their country (Book III., line 255), and were told to found colonies.

<sup>3</sup> See Herodotus, Book VII., 140-143. The reference is to the answer given by the oracle to the Athenians that their wooden walls would keep them safe ; which Themistocles interpreted as meaning their fleet.

<sup>4</sup> Cicero, on the contrary, suggests that the reason why the oracles ceased was this, that men became less credulous. ('De Div.' ii., 57.) Lecky, 'History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne,' vol. i., p. 368.



To her is happiness ; for whatever breast  
 Contains the deity, its shattered frame  
 Surges with frenzy, and the soul divine  
 Shakes the frail breath that with the god receives,  
 As prize or punishment, untimely death.

These tripods Appius seeks, unmoved for years, 140  
 These soundless caverned rocks, in quest to learn  
 Hesperia's destinies. At his command  
 To loose the sacred gateways and permit  
 The prophetess to enter to the god,  
 The keeper calls Phemonoe ;<sup>1</sup> whose steps  
 Round the Castalian fount and in the grove  
 Were wandering careless ; her he bids to pass  
 The portals. But the priestess feared to tread  
 'The awful threshold, and with vain deceits  
 Sought to dissuade the chieftain from his zeal 150  
 To learn the future. 'What this hope,' she cried,  
 'Roman, that moves thy breast to know the fates ?  
 'Long has Parnassus and its silent cleft  
 'Stifled the god ; perhaps the breath divine  
 'Has left its ancient gorge and through the world  
 'Wanders in devious paths ; or else the fane,  
 'Consumed to ashes by barbarian<sup>2</sup> fire,  
 'Closed up the deep recess and choked the path  
 'Of Phœbus ; or the ancient Sibyl's books  
 'Disclosed enough of fate, and thus the gods 160  
 'Decreed to close the oracle ; or else  
 'Since wicked steps are banished from the fane,  
 'In this our impious age the god finds none  
 'Whom he may answer.' But the maiden's guile  
 Was known, for though she would deny the gods

<sup>1</sup> This name is one of those given to the Cumæan Sibyl mentioned at line 216. She was said to have been the daughter of Apollo.

<sup>2</sup> Probably by the Gauls under Brennus, B.C. 279.

Her fears approved them. On her front she binds  
A twisted fillet, while a shining wreath  
Of Phocian laurels crowns the locks that flow  
Upon her shoulders. Hesitating yet,  
The priest compelled her, and she passed within. 170  
But horror filled her of the holiest depths  
From which the mystic oracle proceeds ;  
And resting near the doors, in breast unmoved  
She dares invent the god in words confused,  
Which proved no mind possessed with fire divine ;  
By such false chant less injuring the chief  
Than faith in Phœbus and the sacred fane.  
No burst of words with tremor in their tones,  
No voice re-echoing through the spacious vault  
Proclaimed the deity, no bristling locks 180  
Shook off the laurel chaplet ; but the grove  
Unshaken, and the summits of the shrine,  
Gave proof she shunned the god. The Roman knew  
The tripods yet were idle, and in rage,  
' Wretch,' he exclaimed, ' to us and to the gods,  
' Whose presence thou pretendest, thou shalt pay  
' The punishment ; unless thou enter the recess,  
' And cease to speak in phrases of thine own  
' Of this vast conflict, of a world by war  
' Convulsed and shaken.' Then by fear compelled, 190  
At length the priestess sought the furthest depths,  
And stayed beside the tripods ; and there came  
Into her unaccustomed breast the god,  
Breathed from the living rock for centuries  
Untouched ; nor ever with a mightier power  
Did Pæan's inspiration seize the frame  
Of Delphic priestess ; his pervading touch  
Expelled the mortal, and her former mind,  
And made her wholly his. In maddened trance

She whirled throughout the cave, her locks erect      200  
With horror, and the fillets of the god  
Dashed to the ground ; her steps unguided turned  
To this side and to that ; the tripods fell  
O'erturned ; within her seethed the mighty fire  
Of angry Phœbus ; nor with whip alone  
He urged her onwards, but with curb restrained ;  
Nor was it given her by the god to speak  
All that she knew ; for into one vast mass <sup>1</sup>  
All time was gathered, and her panting chest  
Groaned 'neath the centuries.    In order long      210  
All things lay bare : the future yet unveiled  
Struggled for light ; each fate required a voice ;  
The compass of the seas, Creation's birth,  
Creation's death, the number of the sands,  
All these she knew.    Thus on a former day  
The prophetess upon the Cuman shore,<sup>2</sup>  
Disdaining that her frenzy should be slave  
To other nations, from the boundless threads  
Chose out with pride of hand the fates of Rome.  
E'en so Phemonoe, for a time oppressed      220  
With fates unnumbered, laboured ere she found,  
Beneath such mighty destinies concealed,  
Thine, Appius, who alone hadst sought the god  
In land Castalian ; then from foaming lips  
First rushed the madness forth, and murmurs loud  
Uttered with panting breath and blent with groans ;  
Till through the spacious vault a voice at length  
Broke from the virgin conquered by the god :  
'From this great struggle thou, O Roman, free  
'Escap'st the threats of war : alive, in peace,      230

<sup>1</sup> These lines form the Latin motto prefixed to Shelley's poem, 'The Demon of the World.'

<sup>2</sup> Referring to the visit of Æneas to the Sibyl. (Virgil, 'Æneid,' vi., 70, &c.)

‘Thou shalt possess the hollow in the coast  
‘Of vast Eubœa.’ Thus she spake, no more.

Ye mystic tripods, guardians of the fates  
And Pæan, thou, from whom no day is hid  
By heaven’s high rulers, Master of the truth,  
Why fear’st thou to reveal the deaths of kings,  
Rome’s murdered princes, and the latest doom  
Of her great Empire tottering to its fall,  
And all the bloodshed of that western land ?  
Were yet the stars in doubt on Magnus’ fate 240  
Not yet decreed, and did the gods yet shrink  
From that, the greatest crime ? Or wert thou dumb  
That Fortune’s sword for civil strife might wreak  
Just vengeance, and a Brutus’ arm once more  
Strike down the tyrant ?

From the temple doors  
Rushed forth the prophetess in frenzy driven,  
Not all her knowledge uttered ; and her eyes,  
Still troubled by the god who reigned within,  
Or filled with wild affright, or fired with rage  
Gaze on the wide expanse : still works her face 250  
Convulsive ; on her cheeks a crimson blush  
With ghastly pallor blent, though not of fear.  
Her weary heart throbs ever ; and as seas  
Boom swollen by northern winds, she finds in sighs,  
All inarticulate, relief. But while  
She hastes from that dread light in which she saw  
The fates, to common day, lo ! on her path  
The darkness fell. Then by a Stygian draught  
Of the forgetful river, Phœbus snatched  
Back from her soul his secrets ; and she fell 260  
Yet hardly living.

Nor did Appius dread  
Approaching death, but by dark oracles

Baffled, while yet the Empire of the world  
 Hung in the balance, sought his promised realm  
 In Chalcis of Eubœa. Yet to escape  
 All ills of earth, the crash of war—what god  
 Can give thee such a boon, but death alone?  
 For on the solitary shore a grave  
 Awaits thee, where Carystos' marble crags<sup>1</sup>  
 Draw in the passage of the sea, and where 270  
 The fane of Rhamnus rises to the gods<sup>2</sup>  
 Who hate the proud, and where the ocean strait  
 Boils in swift whirlpools, and Euripus draws  
 Deceitful in his tides, a bane to ships,  
 Chalcidian vessels to bleak Aulis' shore.

But Cæsar carried from the conquered west  
 His eagles to another world of war;  
 When envying his victorious course the gods  
 Almost turned back the prosperous tide of fate.  
 Not on the battle-field borne down by arms, 280  
 But in his tents, within the rampart lines,  
 The hoped-for prize of this unholy war  
 Seemed for a moment gone. That faithful host,  
 His comrades trusted in a hundred fields,  
 Almost forsook him. The sad trump perchance  
 Mute for a moment, and the blade in sheath  
 Grown cold, had tamed their frenzy for the war;  
 Or else in hope of greater gifts, their cause  
 And leader they betrayed, and sold the sword  
 Still soiled with murder. By no other risk 290  
 Cæsar more surely learned how as he looked  
 O'er all things else, the height on which he stood  
 Trembled beneath him. But a moment since

<sup>1</sup> Appius was seized with fever as soon as he reached the spot; and there he died and was buried, thus fulfilling the oracle.

<sup>2</sup> That is, Nemesis.



His high behest drew nations to the war ;  
 Now, maimed of all who smote, no weapon left  
 Saving his own, he knows that swords unsheathed  
 Are wielded by the soldier, not the chief.  
 No timorous voice was there ; no silent wrath  
 Concealed ; nor doubting mind, as though alone  
 Indignant at the wrong, and in distrust 300  
 Of those in turn distrusting. Fear in each  
 Had fled before the boldness of the host :  
 The crime is free where thousands bear the guilt.  
 They hurled their menace : ' Cæsar, give us leave  
 ' To quit thy crimes ; thou seek'st by land and sea  
 ' The sword to slay us ; let the fields of Gaul  
 ' And far Iberia, and the world proclaim  
 ' How for thy victories our comrades fell.  
 ' What boots it us that by an army's blood  
 ' The Rhine and Rhone and all the northern lands 310  
 ' Thou hast subdued ? Thou giv'st us civil war  
 ' For all these battles ; such the prize. When fled  
 ' The Senate trembling, and when Rome was ours  
 ' What homes or temples did we spoil ? Our hands  
 ' Reek with offence ! Aye, but our poverty  
 ' Proclaims our innocence ! What end shall be  
 ' Of arms and armies ? What shall be enough  
 ' If Rome suffice not ? and what lies beyond ?  
 ' Behold these silvered locks, these nerveless hands  
 ' And shrunken arms, once stalwart ! In thy wars 320  
 ' Gone is the strength of life, gone all its pride !  
 ' Dismiss thine aged soldiers to their deaths.  
 ' How shameless is our prayer ! Not on hard turf  
 ' To stretch our dying limbs ; nor seek in vain,  
 ' When parts the soul, a hand to close our eyes ;  
 ' <sup>1</sup> Not with the helm to strike the stony ground :

<sup>1</sup> Reading ' galeam,' with Francken ; not ' glebam.'



' Rather to feel the dear one's last embrace,  
 ' And gain a humble but a separate tomb.  
 ' Let sickness end old age. If Cæsar's slaves,  
 ' Let something more than battle be our doom. 330  
 ' Deem'st thou we are thy dupes? that we alone  
 ' In civil war are ignorant what crime  
 ' Will fetch the highest price? What thou canst dare  
 ' These years have proved, or nothing; law divine  
 ' Nor human ordinance shall hold thine hand.  
 ' He was our leader on the banks of Rhine;  
 ' Now is our equal; for the stain of crime  
 ' Makes all men like. And for a judge ingrate  
 ' We waste our valour; for as fortune's gift  
 ' He takes the victory which our arms have won: 340  
 ' But we his fortunes are, his fates are ours  
 ' To fashion as we will. Boast that the gods  
 ' Shall do thy bidding! Nay, thy soldiers' will  
 ' Shall close the war.' With threatening mien and speech  
 Thus through the camp the troops demand their chief.

When faith and loyalty are fled, and hope  
 For aught but evil, thus may civil war  
 In mutiny and discord find its end!  
 What general had not feared at such revolt?  
 But mighty Cæsar trusting on the throw,<sup>1</sup> 350  
 As was his wont, his fortune, and o'erjoyed  
 To front their anger raging at its height  
 Unflinching comes. No temples of the gods,  
 Not Jove's high fane on the Tarpeian rock,  
 Not Rome's high dames nor maidens had he grudged  
 To their most savage lust: that they should ask

<sup>1</sup> Montaigne (Book I., cap. 23) compares Cæsar with Louis XI., 'the most mistrustful of our kings,' who committed his life and liberty into his enemies' hands in order to show his absolute confidence in them.

The worst, his wish, and love the spoils of war.  
Nor feared he aught save order at the hands  
Of that unconquered host. Art thou not shamed  
That strife should please thee only, now condemned 360  
Even by thy minions? Shall *they* shrink from blood,  
*They* from the sword recoil? and thou rush on  
Heedless of guilt, through right and through unright,  
Nor learn that men may lay their arms aside  
Yet bear to live? This civil butchery  
Escapes thy grasp. Stay thou thy crimes at length;  
Nor force thy will on those who will no more.

Upon a turfy mound unmoved he stood  
And, since he feared not, worthy to be feared;  
And thus while anger stirred his soul began : 370  
' Thou that with voice and hand didst rage but now  
' Against thine absent chief, behold me here;  
' Plunge in this breast, all ready for the wound  
' And bare, thy sword; and end the war and flee.  
' This mutiny devoid of daring deed  
' Betrays your coward souls, betrays the youth  
' Who tires of victories which gild the arms  
' Of an unconquered chief, and yearns for flight.  
' Leave me to fate; with that I'll wage the war  
' You I cast forth. For every weapon left, 380  
' Fortune shall find a man, to wield it well.  
' Shall Magnus in his flight with such a fleet  
' Draw nations in his train; and not to me  
' My victories bring legions? They shall reap  
' For its mere close the prizes of the war  
' Won by your toil, and scatheless join the train  
' That leads my chariot to the sacred hill:  
' While you, despised in age and battle worn,  
' Gaze on our triumph from the civic crowd.  
' Think you your dastard flight shall give me pause? 390

' If all the rivers that now seek the sea  
 ' Were to withdraw their waters, it would fail  
 ' By not one inch, no more than by their flow  
 ' It rises now. Have then your efforts given  
 ' Strength to my cause? Not so: the heavenly gods  
 ' Stoop not so low; fate has no time to judge  
 ' Your lives and deaths. The fortunes of the world  
 ' Follow heroic souls: for the fit few  
 ' The many live; and you who terrified  
 ' With me the northern and Iberian worlds, 400  
 ' Would flee when led by Magnus. Strong with me  
 ' Was Labienus:<sup>1</sup> vile deserter now;  
 ' A homeless exile with his chief preferred.  
 ' Nor were your faith more firm if, neither side  
 ' Espoused, you ceased from arms. Who leaves me once,  
 ' Though not to fight against me with the foe,  
 ' Joins not my ranks again. Surely the gods  
 ' Smile on these arms who for so great a war  
 ' Grant me fresh soldiers. From what heavy load  
 ' Fortune relieves me! for the hands which aimed 410  
 ' At all, to which the world did not suffice,  
 ' I now disarm, and for myself alone  
 ' Reserve the conflict. Quit ye, then, my camp,  
 ' And leave my standards to the grasp of men,  
 ' Coward<sup>2</sup> Quirites! But some guilty few  
 ' I keep, not as their captain, but their judge.  
 ' Lie, traitors, prone on earth, stretch out the neck  
 ' And take th' avenging blow. And thou whose strength  
 ' Shall now support me, young and yet untaught,  
 ' Behold the doom and learn to strike and die.' 420

<sup>1</sup> Labienus left Cæsar's ranks after the Rubicon was crossed, and joined his rival. In his mouth Lucan puts the speech made at the oracle of Hammon in Book IX. He was slain at Munda, B.C. 45.

<sup>2</sup> That is, civilians; no longer soldiers. This one contemptuous expression is said to have shocked and abashed the army. (Tacitus, 'Ann.,' I., 42.)

Such were his words of ire, and all the host  
Drew back and trembled at the voice of him  
They would depose, as though their very swords  
Would from their scabbards leap at his command  
Themselves unwilling ; but he only feared  
Lest hand and blade to satisfy the doom  
Might be denied ; till they submitting pledged  
Their lives and swords alike, beyond his hope.  
To strike and suffer <sup>1</sup> holds in surest thrall  
The heart inured to guilt ; and Cæsar kept, 430  
By dreadful compact ratified in blood,  
Those whom he feared to lose.

He bids them reach  
In ten days' march Brundisium, and recall  
From old Tarentum and from Hydrus lone  
His navy, and from Leucas' point remote,  
And the Salapian marsh where Sipus lies  
By rich Garganus, jutting from the shore  
In huge escarpment that divides the waves  
Of Hadria ; on each hand, his seaward slopes  
Buffeted by the winds ; or Auster borne 440  
From sweet Apulia, or the sterner blast  
Of Boreas rushing from Dalmatian strands.

But Cæsar entered safe without a guard  
Rome, trembling, taught to serve the garb of peace,  
Dictator named, to grant their prayers, forsooth :  
Consul, in honour of the roll of Rome.  
Then first of all the names by which we now  
Lie to our masters, men found out the use :  
For to preserve his right to wield the sword  
He mixed the civil axes with his brands ; 450  
With eagles, fasces ; with an empty word

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'tenet,' with Hosius and Francken ; not 'timet,' as Haskins.  
The prospect of inflicting punishment attracted, while the suffering of it  
subdued, the mutineers.

Clothing his power ; and stamped upon the time  
 A worthy designation ; for what name  
 Could better mark the dread Pharsalian year  
 Than ' Cæsar, Consul ' ? <sup>1</sup> Now the famous field  
 Pretends its ancient ceremonies : calls  
 The tribes in order and divides the votes  
 In vain solemnity of empty urns.  
 Nor did they heed the portents of the sky :  
 Deaf were the augurs to the thunder roll ;  
 The owl flew on the left ; yet were the birds  
 Propitious sworn. Then was the ancient name  
 Degraded first ; and monthly Consuls, <sup>2</sup> now  
 Shorn of their rank, were chosen to mark the years.  
 And Trojan Alba's <sup>3</sup> god (since Latium's fall  
 Deserving not) beheld the wonted fires  
 Blaze from his altars on the festal night.

460

Then through Apulia's fallows, which her hinds  
 Left all untilled, to sluggish weeds a prey  
 Passed Cæsar onward, swifter than the fire  
 Of heaven, or tigress dam : until he reached  
 Brundisium's winding ramparts, built of old  
 By Cretan colonists. There icy winds  
 Constrained the billows, and his trembling fleet  
 Feared for the winter storms nor dared the main.  
 But Cæsar's soul burned at the moments lost  
 For speedy battle, nor could brook delay  
 Within the port, indignant that the sea  
 Should give safe passage to his routed foe :

470

<sup>1</sup> Cæsar was named Dictator while at Massilia. Entering Rome, he held the office for eleven days only, but was elected Consul for the incoming year, B.C. 48, along with Servilius Isauricus. (Cæsar, ' De Bello Civili,' iii., 1 ; Merivale, chapter xvi.)

<sup>2</sup> In the time of the Empire, the degraded Consulship, preserved only as a name, was frequently transferred at monthly, or even shorter, intervals from one favourite to another.

<sup>3</sup> Cæsar performed the solemn rites of the great Latin festival on the Alban Mount during his Dictatorship. (Compare Book VII., line 471.)



And thus he stirred his troops, in seas unskilled, 480  
 With words of courage : ' When the winter wind  
 ' Has seized on sky and ocean, firm its hold ;  
 ' But the inconstancy of cloudy spring  
 ' Permits no certain breezes to prevail  
 ' Upon the billows. Straight shall be our course.  
 ' No winding nooks of coast, but open seas  
 ' Struck by the northern wind alone we plough,  
 ' And may he bend the spars, and bear us swift  
 ' To Grecian cities ; else Pompeius' ships  
 ' From coasts Phæacian,<sup>1</sup> with their swifter oars 490  
 ' May catch our flagging sails. Cast loose the ropes  
 ' From our victorious prows. Too long we waste  
 ' Tempests that blow to bear us to our goal.'

Now sank the sun to rest ; the evening star  
 Shone on the darkening heaven, and the moon  
 Reigned with her paler light, when all the fleet  
 Freed from retaining cables seized the main.  
 With slackened sheet the canvas wooed the breeze,  
 Which rose and fell and fitful died away,  
 Till motionless the sails, and all the waves 500  
 Were still as deepest pool, where never wind  
 Ripples the surface. Thus in Scythian climes  
 Cimmerian Bosphorus restrains the deep  
 Bound fast in frosty fetters ; Ister's streams<sup>2</sup>  
 No more impel the main, and ships constrained  
 Stand fast in ice ; and while in depths below  
 The waves still murmur, loud the charger's hoof  
 Sounds on the surface, and the travelling wheel  
 Furrows a track upon the frozen marsh.  
 Cruel as tempest was the calm that lay 510

<sup>1</sup> Dyrrhachium was founded by the Corcyreans, with whom the Homeric Phæacians have been identified.

<sup>2</sup> Apparently making the Danube discharge into the Sea of Azov. See Mr. Heitland's Introduction, p. 53.



In stagnant pools upon the mournful deep :  
Against the course of nature lay outstretched  
A rigid ocean : 'twas as if the sea  
Forgot its ancient ways and knew no more  
The ceaseless tides, nor any breeze of heaven,  
Nor quivered at the image of the sun,  
Mirrored upon its wave. For while the fleet  
Hung in mid passage motionless, the foe  
Might hurry to attack, with sturdy stroke  
Churning the deep ; or famine's deadly grip 520  
Might seize the ships becalmed. For dangers new  
New vows they found : for tempests was their prayer,  
To rouse the billows till the watery plain  
Freed from its torpor should be sea once more.  
But cloudless was the sky and calm the deep,  
All hope of shipwreck gone, till night was fled,  
And marred by gathering mist the day arose  
And stirred the depths, and moved the fleet along  
Towards the Ceraunian headland ; and the waves  
And favouring breezes followed on the ships, 530  
Now speeding faster, till (their goal attained)  
They cast their anchors on Palæste's<sup>1</sup> shore.

This land first saw the chiefs in neighbouring camps  
Confronted, which the streams of Apsus bound  
And swifter Genusus ; a lengthy course  
Is run by neither, but on Apsus' waves  
Scarce flowing from a marsh, the frequent boat  
Finds room to swim ; while on the foamy bed  
Of Genusus by sun or shower compelled  
The melted snows pour seawards. Here were met 540  
(So Fortune ordered it) the mighty pair ;  
And in its woes the world yet vainly hoped  
That, brought to nearer touch, their crime itself

<sup>1</sup> At the foot of the Acroceraunian range.

Might breed abhorrence : for from either camp  
Voices were clearly heard and features seen.  
Nor e'er, Pompeius, since that distant day  
When Cæsar's daughter and thy spouse was reft  
By pitiless fate away, nor left a pledge,  
Did thy loved kinsman (save on sands of Nile)  
So nearly look upon thy face again. 550

But Cæsar's mind though frenzied for the fight  
Was forced to pause until Antonius brought  
The rearward troops ; Antonius even now  
Rehearsing Leucas' fight. With prayers and threats  
Cæsar exhorts him. ' Why delay the fates,  
' Thou cause of evil to the suffering world ?  
' My speed hath won the major part : from thee  
' Fortune demands the final stroke alone.  
' Do Libyan whirlpools with deceitful tides  
' Uncertain separate us ? Is the deep 560  
' Untried to which I call ? To unknown risks  
' Art thou commanded ? Cæsar bids thee come,  
' Thou sluggard, not to leave him. Long ago  
' I ran my ships midway through sands and shoals  
' To harbours held by foes ; and dost thou fear  
' My friendly camp ? I mourn the waste of days  
' Which fate allotted us. Upon the waves  
' And winds I call unceasing : hold not back  
' Thy willing troops, but let them dare the sea ;  
' Here gladly shall they come to join my camp, 570  
' Though risking shipwreck : with indignant voice  
' I call upon thee. Not in equal shares  
' The world has fallen between us : thou alone  
' Dost hold Italia, but Epirus I  
' And all the lords of Rome.' Twice called and thrice  
Antonius lingered still : but Cæsar's mind  
Was that he failed the gods, not they his cause.

By night he braved the strait which others feared  
 Though bidden : for he knew that daring deeds  
 Are safely wrought beneath the smile of heaven : 580  
 And thus he hoped in fragile boat to cross  
 The stormy billows fearful to a fleet.

Now gentle night had brought repose from arms ;  
 And sleep, blest guardian of the poor man's couch,  
 Restored the weary ; and the camp was still.  
 The hour was come that called the second watch  
 When mighty Cæsar, in the silence vast  
 With cautious tread advanced to such a deed <sup>1</sup>  
 As slaves should dare not. Fortune for his guide,  
 Alone he passes on, and o'er the guard 590  
 Stretched in repose he leaps, in secret wrath  
 At such a sleep. Pacing the winding beach,  
 Fast to a sea-worn rock he finds a boat  
 On ocean's marge afloat. Hard by on shore  
 Its master dwelt within his humble home.  
 No solid front it reared, for sterile rush  
 And marshy reed enwoven formed the walls,  
 Propped by a shallop with its bending sides  
 Turned upwards. Cæsar's hand upon the door  
 Knocks twice and thrice until the fabric shakes. 600  
 Amyclas from his couch of soft seaweed  
 Arising, calls : 'What shipwrecked sailor seeks  
 'My humble home ? Who hopes for aid from me,  
 'By fates adverse compelled ?' He stirs the heap  
 Upon the hearth, until a tiny spark  
 Glows in the darkness, and throws wide the door.

<sup>1</sup> Cæsar himself says nothing of this adventure. But it is mentioned by Dion, Appian and Plutarch ('Cæsar,' 38). Dean Merivale thinks the story may have been invented to introduce the apophthegm used by Cæsar to the sailor, 'Fear nothing; you carry Cæsar and his fortunes' (line 665 post). Mommsen accepts the story, as of an attempt which was only abandoned because no mariner could be induced to undertake it. Lucan colours it with his wildest and most exaggerated hyperbole.

Careless of war, he knew that civil strife  
Stoops not to cottages. O ! happy life  
That poverty affords ! great gift of heaven  
Too little understood ! what mansion wall, 610  
What temple of the gods, would feel no fear  
When Cæsar called for entrance ? Then the chief :  
‘ Enlarge thine hopes and look for better things.  
‘ Do but my bidding, and on yonder shore  
‘ Place me, and thou shalt cease from one poor boat  
‘ To earn thy living ; and in years to come  
‘ Look for a rich old age : and trust thy fates  
‘ To those high gods whose wont it is to bless  
‘ The poor with sudden plenty.’ So he spake  
E’en at such time in accents of command, 620  
For how could Cæsar else ? Amyclas said,  
‘ ’Twere dangerous to brave the deep to-night.  
‘ The sun descended not in ruddy clouds  
‘ Or peaceful rays to rest ; part of his beams  
‘ Presaged a southern gale, the rest proclaimed  
‘ A northern tempest ; and his middle orb,  
‘ Shorn of its strength, permitted human eyes  
‘ To gaze upon his grandeur ; and the moon  
‘ Rose not with silver horns upon the night  
‘ Nor pure in middle space ; her slender points 630  
‘ Not drawn aright, but blushing with the track  
‘ Of raging tempests, till her lurid light  
‘ Was sadly veiled within the clouds. Again  
‘ The forest sounds ; the surf upon the shore ;  
‘ The dolphin’s mood, uncertain where to play ;  
‘ The sea-mew on the land ; the heron used  
‘ To wade among the shallows, borne aloft  
‘ And soaring on his wings—all these alarm ;  
‘ The raven, too, who plunged his head in spray,  
‘ As if to anticipate the coming rain, 640

- ‘ And trod the margin with unsteady gait.
- ‘ But if the cause demands, behold me thine.
- ‘ Either we reach the bidden shore, or else
- ‘ Storm and the deep forbid—we can no more.’

Thus said he loosed the boat and raised the sail.

- No sooner done than stars were seen to fall
- In flaming furrows from the sky : nay, more ;
- The pole star trembled in its place on high :
- Black horror marked the surging of the sea ;
- The main was boiling in long tracts of foam, 650
- Uncertain of the wind, yet seized with storm.
- Then spake the captain of the trembling bark :
- ‘ See what remorseless ocean has in store !
- ‘ Whether from east or west the storm may come
- ‘ Is still uncertain, for as yet confused
- ‘ The billows tumble. Judged by clouds and sky
- ‘ A western tempest : by the murmuring deep
- ‘ A wild south-eastern gale shall sweep the sea.
- ‘ Nor bark nor man shall reach Hesperia’s shore
- ‘ In this wild rage of waters. To return 660
- ‘ Back on our course forbidden by the gods,
- ‘ Is our one refuge, and with labouring boat
- ‘ To reach the shore ere yet the nearest land
- ‘ May be too distant.’

- But great Cæsar’s trust
- Was in himself, to make all dangers yield.
- And thus he answered : ‘ Scorn the threatening sea,
- ‘ Spread out thy canvas to the raging wind ;
- ‘ If for thy pilot thou refuseth heaven,
- ‘ Me in its stead receive. Alone in thee
- ‘ One cause of terror just—thou dost not know 670
- ‘ Thy comrade, ne’er deserted by the gods,
- ‘ Whom fortune blesses e’en without a prayer.
- ‘ Break through the middle storm and trust in me.



‘ The burden of this fight falls not on us  
‘ But on the sky and ocean ; and our bark  
‘ Shall swim the billows safe in him it bears.  
‘ Nor shall the wind rage long : the boat itself  
‘ Shall calm the waters. Flee the nearest shore,  
‘ Steer for the ocean with unswerving hand :  
‘ Then in the deep, when to our ship and us 680  
‘ No other port is given, believe thou hast  
‘ Calabria’s harbours. And dost thou not know  
‘ The purpose of such havoc ? Fortune seeks  
‘ In all this tumult of the sea and sky  
‘ A boon for Cæsar.’ Then a hurricane  
Swooped on the boat and tore away the sheet :  
The fluttering sail fell on the fragile mast :  
And groaned the joints. From all the universe  
Commingled perils rushed. In Atlas’ seas  
First Corus<sup>1</sup> raised his head, and stirred the depths 690  
To fury, and had forced upon the rocks  
Whole seas and oceans ; but the chilly north  
Drove back the deep that doubted which was lord.  
But Scythian Aquilo prevailed, whose blast  
Tossed up the main and showed as shallow pools  
Each deep abyss ; and yet was not the sea  
Heaped on the crags, for Corus’ billows met  
The waves of Boreas : such seas had clashed  
Even were the winds withdrawn ; Eurys enraged  
Burst from the cave, and Notus black with rain, 700  
And all the winds from every part of heaven  
Strove for their own ; and thus the ocean stayed  
Within his boundaries. No petty seas  
Rapt in the storm are whirled. The Tuscan deep  
Invades th’ Ægean ; in Ionian gulfs  
Sounds wandering Hadria. How long the crags

<sup>1</sup> Book I., 464.



Which that day fell, the Ocean's blows had braved !  
 What lofty peaks did vanquished earth resign !  
 And yet on yonder coast such mighty waves  
 Took not their rise ; from distant regions came 710  
 Those monster billows, driven on their course  
 By that great current which surrounds the world.<sup>1</sup>  
 Thus did the King of Heaven, when length of years  
 Wore out the forces of his thunder, call  
 His brother's trident to his help, what time  
 The earth and sea one second kingdom formed  
 And ocean knew no limit but the sky.  
 Now, too, the sea had risen to the stars  
 In mighty mass, had not Olympus' chief  
 Pressed down its waves with clouds : that night from  
 heaven 720  
 Came not, as others ; but the murky air  
 Was dim with pallor of the realms below ;<sup>2</sup>  
 The sky lay on the deep ; within the clouds  
 The waves received the rain : the lightning flash  
 Clove through the parted air a path obscured  
 By mist and darkness : and the heavenly vaults  
 Re-echoed to the tumult, and the frame  
 That holds the sky was shaken. Nature feared  
 Chaos returned, as though the elements  
 Had burst their bonds, and night had come to mix 730  
 Th' infernal shades with heaven.

In such turmoil

Not to have perished was their only hope.  
 Far as from Leucas point the placid main  
 Spreads to the horizon, from the billow's crest

<sup>1</sup> The ocean current, which, according to Hecataeus, surrounded the world. But Herodotus of this theory says, 'For my part I know of no river called Ocean, and I think that Homer or one of the earlier poets invented the name and introduced it into his poetry.' (Book II., 23, and Book IV., 36.) In 'Oceanus' Æschylus seems to have intended to personify the great surrounding stream. ('Prom. Vinc.' lines 291, 308.)

<sup>2</sup> Comp. VI., 615.

They viewed the dashing of th' infuriate sea ;  
 Thence sinking to the middle trough, their mast  
 Scarce topped the watery height on either hand,  
 Their sails in clouds, their keel upon the ground.  
 For all the sea was piled into the waves,  
 And drawn from depths between laid bare the sand. 740  
 The master of the boat forgot his art,  
 For fear o'ercame ; he knew not where to yield  
 Or where to meet the wave : but safety came  
 From ocean's self at war : one billow forced  
 The vessel under, but a huger wave  
 Repelled it upwards, and she rode the storm  
 Through every blast triumphant. Not the shore  
 Of humble Sason,<sup>1</sup> nor Thessalia's coast  
 Indented, not Ambracia's scanty ports  
 Dismayed the mariners, but the giddy tops 750  
 Of high Ceraunia's cliffs.

But Cæsar now,

Thinking the peril worthy of his fates :  
 ' Are such the labours of the gods ? ' exclaimed,  
 ' Bent on my downfall have they sought me thus,  
 ' Here in this puny skiff in such a sea ?  
 ' If to the deep the glory of my fall  
 ' Is due, and not to war, intrepid still  
 ' Whatever death they send shall strike me down.  
 ' Let fate cut short the deeds that I would do  
 ' And hasten on the end : the past is mine. 760  
 ' The northern nations fell beneath my sword ;  
 ' My dreaded name compels the foe to flee.  
 ' Pompeius yields me place ; the people's voice  
 ' Gave at my order what the wars denied.  
 ' And all the titles which denote the powers

<sup>1</sup> Sason is a small island just off the Ceraunian rocks, the point of which is now called Cape Linguetta, and is nearly opposite to Brindisi.

' Known to the Roman state my name shall bear.  
 ' Let none know this but thou who hear'st my prayers,  
 ' Fortune ! that Cæsar summoned to the shades,  
 ' Dictator, Consul, full of honours, died  
 ' Ere his last prize was won. I ask no pyre 770  
 ' Or tomb, ye gods ! wherein my dust may rest :  
 ' Nay ! plunge in middle deep this battered frame !  
 ' All earth shall look for me, nor shall men cease  
 ' At Cæsar's name to fear.' Such words he spake,  
 When lo ! a tenth gigantic billow raised  
 ' The feeble keel, and where between the rocks  
 A cleft gave safety, placed it on the shore.  
 ' Thus in a moment fortune, kingdoms, lands,  
 Once more were Cæsar's.

But on his return

When daylight came, he entered not the camp 780  
 Silent as when he parted ; for his friends  
 Soon pressed around him, and with weeping eyes  
 In accents welcome to his ears began :  
 ' Whither in reckless daring hast thou gone,  
 ' Unpitying Cæsar ? Were these humble lives  
 ' Left here unguarded while thy limbs were given,  
 ' Unsought for, to be scattered by the storm ?  
 ' When on thy breath so many nations hang  
 ' For life and safety, and so great a world  
 ' Calls thee its master, to have courted death 790  
 ' Proves want of heart. Were none of all thy friends  
 ' Deserving held to join their fate with thine ?  
 ' When thou wast tossed upon the stormy main  
 ' We lay in slumber ! Shame upon such sleep !  
 ' And why thyself didst seek Italia's shores ?  
 ' 'Twere cruel (such thy thought) to speak the word  
 ' That bade another dare the furious sea.  
 ' All men must bear what chance or fate may bring,  
 ' The sudden peril and the stroke of death :

' But shall the ruler of the world attempt 800  
 ' The raging ocean ? With incessant prayers  
 ' Why weary heaven ? is it indeed enough  
 ' To crown the war, that Fortune and the deep  
 ' Have cast thee on our shores ? And wouldst thou use  
 ' The grace of favouring deities, to gain  
 ' Not lordship, not the empire of the world,  
 ' But lucky shipwreck ! ' Night dispersed, and soon  
 ' The sun beamed on them, and the wearied deep,  
 ' The winds permitting, lulled its waves to rest.  
 And when Antonius saw a breeze arise 810  
 Fresh from a cloudless heaven, to break the sea,  
 He loosed his ships which, by the pilots' hands  
 And by the wind in equal order held,  
 Swept as a marching host across the main.  
 But night unfriendly from the seamen snatched  
 All governance of sail, parting the ships  
 In divers paths asunder. Like as cranes  
 Deserting frozen Strymon for the streams  
 Of Nile, when winter falls, in casual lines  
 Of wedge-like figures <sup>1</sup> first ascend the sky ; 820  
 But when in loftier heaven the southern breeze  
 Strikes on their pinions tense, in loose array  
 Dispersed at large, in flight irregular,  
 They wing their journey onwards. Stronger winds  
 With day returning blew the navy on,  
 Past Lissus' shelter which they vainly sought,  
 Till bare to northern blasts, Nymphæum's port,  
 But safe in southern, gave the fleet repose.

When Cæsar's troops were gathered in their strength  
 And Magnus saw the battle day was near 830  
 Before his camp, Cornelia he resolved  
 To send to Lesbos' shore, from rage of fight  
 Safe and apart : so lifting from his soul

<sup>1</sup> Compare 'Paradise Lost,' VII., 425.

The weight that burdened it. Thus, lawful Love,  
 Thus art thou tyrant o'er the mightiest mind !  
 His spouse was the one cause why Magnus stayed  
 Nor met his fortunes, though he staked the world  
 And all the destinies of Rome. The word  
 He speaks not though resolved ; so sweet it seemed,  
 When on the future pondering, to gain 840  
 A pause from Fate ! But at the close of night,  
 When drowsy sleep had fled, Cornelia sought  
 To soothe the anxious bosom of her lord  
 And win his kisses ; when amazed she saw  
 His cheek was tearful, and with boding soul  
 Shrank from the hidden wound, nor dared surprise  
 Magnus in tears. But sighing thus he spake :  
 ' Dearer to me than life itself, when life  
 ' Is happy (not at moments such as these) ;  
 ' The day of sorrow comes, too long delayed, 850  
 ' Nor long enough ! With Cæsar at our gates  
 ' With all his forces, a secure retreat  
 ' Shall Lesbos give thee. Try me not with prayers.  
 ' This fatal boon I have denied myself.  
 ' Thou wilt not long be absent from thy spouse.  
 ' Disasters hasten, and things highest fall  
 ' With speediest ruin. 'Tis enough for thee  
 ' To hear of Magnus' peril ; and thy love  
 ' Deceives thee with the thought that thou canst gaze  
 ' Unmoved on civil strife. It shames my soul 860  
 ' On the eve of war to slumber at thy side,  
 ' And rise from thy dear breast when trumpets call  
 ' A woeful world to misery and arms.  
 ' I dread lest Magnus in this war endure  
 ' Nor loss nor sorrow. But do thou lie hid  
 ' Safer than kings or peoples, far removed ;  
 ' That so the grievous fortunes of thy lord  
 ' May lighter fall on thee. If unkind heaven



‘ Our armies rout, still let my choicest part  
‘ Survive in thee ; if fated is my flight, 870  
‘ Still leave me that whereto I fain would flee.’

Hardly at first her senses grasped the words  
In their full misery ; then her mind amazed  
Could scarce find utterance for the grief that pressed.

‘ Nought, Magnus, now is left wherewith to upbraid  
‘ The gods and fates of marriage ; ’tis not death  
‘ That parts our love, nor yet the funeral pyre,  
‘ Nor that dread torch which marks the end of all.  
‘ I share the ignoble lot of vulgar lives :  
‘ My spouse rejects me. Yes, the foe is come ! 880

‘ Break we our bonds and Julia’s sire appease !—  
‘ Is this thy consort, Magnus, this thy faith  
‘ In her fond loving heart ? Can danger fright  
‘ Her and not thee ? Long since our mutual fates  
‘ Hang by one chain ; and dost thou bid me now  
‘ The thunder-bolts of ruin to withstand  
‘ Without thee ? Is it well that I should die  
‘ Even while you pray for fortune ? And suppose  
‘ I flee from evil and with death self-sought  
‘ Follow thy footsteps to the realms below— 890

‘ Am I to live till to that distant isle  
‘ Some tardy rumour of thy fall may come ?  
‘ And then thou say’st, unfeeling ! that by use  
‘ Strength shall be mine to bear such load of ills  
‘ As fate reserves for us : but at such a strength  
‘ My spirit trembles. Ah ! forgive the truth.  
‘ And if the favouring gods shall hear my prayers,  
‘ I shall be last to hear the victory  
‘ In that lone isle of rocks. When all are glad,  
‘ My heart shall throb with anguish, and the sail 900  
‘ Which brings the message I shall see with fear,  
‘ Not safe e’en then : for Cæsar in his flight  
‘ Might seize me there, abandoned and alone



' To be his hostage. If thou place me there,  
 ' The spouse of Magnus, shall not all the world  
 ' Well know the secret Mitylene holds?  
 ' This my last prayer: if all is lost but flight,  
 ' And thou shalt seek the ocean, to my shores  
 ' Turn not thy keel, ill-fated one: for there,  
 ' There will they seek thee.' Thus she spoke dis- 910  
 traught,

Leaped from the couch and rushed upon her fate;  
 No stop nor stay: she clung not to his neck  
 Nor threw her arms about him; both forego  
 The last caress, the last fond pledge of love,  
 And grief rushed in unchecked upon their souls;  
 Still gazing as they part no final words  
 Could either utter, and the sweet Farewell  
 Remained unspoken. This the saddest day  
 Of all their lives: for other woes that came  
 More gently struck on hearts inured to grief. 920  
 Borne to the shore with failing limbs she fell  
 And grasped the sands, embracing, till at last  
 Her maidens placed her senseless in the ship.

Not in such grief she left her country's shores  
 When Cæsar's host drew near; for now she leaves,  
 Though faithful to her lord, his side in flight  
 And flees her spouse. All that next night she waked;  
 Then first what means a widowed couch she knew,  
 Its cold, its solitude. When slumber found  
 Her eyelids, and forgetfulness her soul, 930  
 Seeking with outstretched arms the form beloved,  
 She grasps but air. Though tossed by restless love,  
 She leaves a place beside her as for him  
 Returning. Yet she feared Pompeius lost  
 To her for ever. Nay! such happy lot  
 The gods prepared not; for the hour drew near  
 Which gave her Magnus to her arms again.

BOOK VI

THE FIGHT NEAR DYRRHACHIUM

SCÆVA'S EXPLOITS

THE WITCH OF THESSALIA

Description of Dyrrhachium, which Cæsar attempts to capture, 1-34. He builds a wall round Pompeius' camp, 35-80. Pestilence in his camp and famine in Cæsar's, 81-143. Pompeius attacks Cæsar's works, but is repulsed by Scæva, a centurion, 142-306. He breaks through at another point, 306-366. Cæsar marches into Thessaly, and is followed by Pompeius, 367-389. Description of Thessaly, 390-487. Account of the Hæmonian witches, 488-602, and of Erichtho, whom Sextus Pompeius determines to consult, 607-697. Enquiries of Sextus, and her answer, 698-739. She raises from the dead a corpse who answers her questions and dies again, 740-987.

## BOOK VI

### *THE FIGHT NEAR DYRRHACHIUM—SCÆVA'S EXPLOITS—THE WITCH OF THESSALIA*

Now that the chiefs with minds intent on fight  
Had drawn their armies near upon the hills  
And all the gods beheld their chosen pair,  
Cæsar, the Grecian towns despising, scorned  
To reap the glory of successful war  
Save at his kinsman's cost. In all his prayers  
He seeks that moment, fatal to the world,  
When shall be cast the die, to win or lose,  
And all their fortunes hang upon the throw.  
Thrice he drew out his troops, his eagles thrice, 10  
Demanding battle; to the ruin of Rome  
Thus prompt as ever: but his kinsman foe,  
Proof against every art, refused to leave  
The rampart of his camp. Then marching swift  
By hidden path between the wooded fields  
He seeks, and hopes to seize, Dyrrhachium's <sup>1</sup> fort;  
But Magnus, swifter speeding by the sea,  
First camped on Petra's slopes, a rocky hill  
Thus by the natives named. From thence he keeps

<sup>1</sup> Dyrrhachium (Durazzo) was a Corcyraean colony, but the founder was of Corinth, the metropolis of Corcyra. It stood some sixty miles north of the Ceraunian promontory (Book V., 751). About the year 1100 it was stormed and taken by Robert the Guiscard, after furious battles with the troops of the Emperor Alexius.

It may be observed that, according to Cæsar's account, he succeeded in getting between Pompey and Dyrrhachium, 'De Bello Celtico,' III., 41, 42.

Watch o'er the fortress of Corinthian birth 20  
Which by its towers alone without a guard  
Was safe against a siege. No hand of man  
In ancient days built up her lofty wall,  
No hammer rang upon her massive stones :  
Not all the works of war, nor Time himself  
Shall undermine her. Nature's hand has raised  
Her adamantine rocks and hedged her in  
With bulwarks girded by the foamy main :  
And but for one short bridge of narrow earth  
Dyrrhachium were an island. Steep and fierce, 30  
Dreaded of sailors, are the cliffs that bear  
Her walls ; and tempests, howling from the south,  
Toss up the foaming main upon the roofs ;  
And homes and temples tremble at the shock.

Thirsting for battle and with hopes inflamed  
Here Cæsar hastes, with distant rampart lines  
Seeking unseen to coop his foe within,  
Though spread in spacious camp upon the hills.  
With eagle eye he measures out the land  
Meet to be compassed, nor content with turf 40  
Fit for a hasty mound, he bids his troops  
Tear from the quarries many a giant rock :  
And spoils the dwellings of the Greeks, and drags  
Their walls asunder for his own. Thus rose  
A mighty barrier which no ram could burst  
Nor any ponderous machine of war.

Mountains are cleft, and level through the hills  
The work of Cæsar strides : wide yawns the moat,  
Forts show their towers rising on the heights,  
And in vast circle forests are enclosed 50  
And groves and spacious lands, and beasts of prey,  
As in a line of toils. Pompeius lacked  
Nor field nor forage in th' encircled span

Nor room to move his camp ; nay, rivers rose  
 Within, and ran their course and reached the sea ;  
 And Cæsar wearied ere he saw the whole,  
 And daylight failed him. Let the ancient tale  
 Attribute to the labours of the gods  
 The walls of Ilium : let the fragile bricks  
 Which compass in great Babylon, amaze 60  
 The fleeing Parthian. Here a larger space  
 Than those great cities which Orontes swift  
 And Tigris' stream enclose, or that which boasts  
 In Eastern climes, the lordly palaces  
 Fit for Assyria's kings, is closed by walls  
 Amid the haste and tumult of a war  
 Forced to completion. Yet this labour huge  
 Was spent in vain. So many hands had joined  
 Or Sestos with Abydos, or had tamed  
 With mighty mole the Hellespontine wave, 70  
 Or Corinth from the realm of Pelops king  
 Had rent asunder, or had spared each ship  
 Her voyage round the long Malean cape,  
 Or had done anything most hard, to mould  
 The world's created surface. Here the war  
 Was prisoned : blood predestinate to flow  
 In all the parts of earth ; the host foredoomed  
 To fall in Libya or in Thessaly  
 Was here : in such small amphitheatre  
 The tide of civil passion rose and fell. 80

At first Pompeius knew not : so the hind  
 Who peaceful tills the mid-Sicilian fields  
 Hears not Pelorus <sup>1</sup> sounding to the storm ;  
 So billows thunder on Rutupian shores,<sup>1</sup>  
 Unheard by distant Caledonia's tribes.  
 But when he saw the mighty barrier stretch

<sup>1</sup> C. del Faro, the N.E. point of Sicily.

<sup>2</sup> The shores of Kent.



O'er hill and valley, and enclose the land,  
 He bade his columns leave their rocky hold  
 And seize on posts of vantage in the plain ;  
 Thus forcing Cæsar to extend his troops 90  
 On wider lines ; and holding for his own  
 Such space encompassed as divides from Rome  
 Aricia,<sup>1</sup> sacred to that goddess chaste  
 Of old Mycenæ ; or as Tiber holds  
 From Rome's high ramparts to the Tuscan sea,  
 Unless he deviate. No trumpet call  
 Commands an onset, and the darts that fly  
 Fly though forbidden ; but the arm that flings  
 For proof the lance, at random, here and there  
 Deals impious slaughter. Weighty care compelled 100  
 Each leader to withhold his troops from fight ;  
 For there the weary earth of produce failed  
 Pressed by Pompeius' steeds, whose horny hoofs  
 Rang in their gallop on the grassy fields  
 And killed the succulence. They strengthless lay  
 Upon the mown expanse, nor pile of straw,  
 Brought from full barns in place of living grass,  
 Relieved their craving ; shook their panting flanks,  
 And as they wheeled Death struck his victim down.  
 Then foul contagion filled the murky air 110  
 Whose poisonous weight pressed on them in a cloud  
 Pestiferous ; as in Nesis' isle<sup>2</sup> the breath  
 Of Styx rolls upwards from the mist-clad rocks ;  
 Or that fell vapour which the caves exhale  
 From Typhon<sup>3</sup> raging in the depths below.

<sup>1</sup> Aricia was situated on the Via Appia, about sixteen miles from Rome. There was a temple of Diana close to it, among some woods on a small lake. Aricia was Horace's first halting place on his journey to Brundisium ('Satires,' i., 5). As to Diana, see Book I., line 502.

<sup>2</sup> An island in the Bay of Puteoli.

<sup>3</sup> Typhon, the hundred-headed giant, was buried under Mount Etna.

Then died the soldiers, for the streams they drank  
Held yet more poison than the air : the skin  
Was dark and rigid, and the fiery plague  
Made hard their vitals, and with pitiless tooth  
Gnawed at their wasted features, while their eyes 120  
Started from out their sockets, and the head  
Drooped from sheer weariness. So the disease  
Grew swifter in its strides till scarce was room,  
’Twixt life and death, for sickness, and the pest  
Slew as it struck its victim, and the dead  
Thrust from the tents (such all their burial) lay  
Blent with the living. Yet their camp was pitched  
Hard by the breezy sea by which might come  
All nations’ harvests, and the northern wind  
Not seldom rolled the murky air away. 130  
Their foe, not vexed with pestilential air  
Nor stagnant waters, ample range enjoyed  
Upon the spacious uplands : yet as though  
In leaguer, famine seized them for its prey.  
Scarce were the crops half grown when Cæsar saw  
How prone they seized upon the food of beasts,  
And stripped of leaves the bushes and the groves,  
And dragged from roots unknown the doubtful herb,  
Which might be death : all things they ate that fire  
May soften, or teeth may bite, or arid throat 140  
May swallow ; things that never heretofore  
Were placed on tables—thus the host at large—  
Yet was there plenty with the leaguered foe.

When Magnus first was pleased to break his bonds,  
No nightly dash he makes, by craft to seize  
His sleeping foe unarmed : his soul had scorned  
Such path obscure to victory. ’Twas his aim,  
To lay the turrets low ; to mark his track,  
By ruin spread afar ; and with the sword

To hew a path between his slaughtered foes. 150  
 Minucius' <sup>1</sup> turret was the chosen spot  
 Where groves of trees and thickets gave approach  
 Safe, unbetrayed by dust. Up from the fields  
 Flashed all at once his eagles into sight  
 And all his trumpets blared. But ere the sword  
 Could win the battle, on the hostile ranks  
 Dread panic fell ; prone as in death they lay  
 Where else upright they should withstand the foe ;  
 Nor more availed their valour, and in vain  
 The cloud of weapons flew, with none to slay. 160  
 Then blazing torches rolling pitchy flame  
 Are hurled, and shaken nod the lofty towers  
 And threaten ruin, and the bastions groan  
 Struck by the frequent engine, and the troops  
 Of Magnus by triumphant eagles led  
 Stride o'er the rampart, in their front the world.

Yet now that passage which not Cæsar's self  
 Nor thousand valiant squadrons had availed  
 To rescue from their grasp, one man in arms  
 Steadfast till death refused them ; Scæva named 170  
 This hero soldier : long he served in fight  
 Waged 'gainst the savage on the banks of Rhone ;  
 And now centurion made, through deeds of blood,  
 He bore the staff <sup>2</sup> before the marshalled line.  
 Prone to all wickedness, he little recked  
 How valourous deeds in civil war may be  
 Greatest of crimes ; and when he saw how turned  
 His comrades from the war and sought in flight  
 A refuge, ' Whence,' he cried, ' this impious fear  
 ' Unknown to Cæsar's armies ? Do ye turn 180  
 ' Your backs on death, and are ye not ashamed

<sup>1</sup> This was Scæva's name.

<sup>2</sup> The vine-wood staff was the badge of the centurion's office.

‘ Not to be found where slaughtered heroes lie ?  
‘ Is loyalty too weak ? Yet love of fight  
‘ Might bid you stand. We are the chosen few  
‘ Through whom the foe would break. Unbought by blood  
‘ This day shall not be theirs. ’Neath Cæsar’s eye,  
‘ True, death would be more happy ; but this boon  
‘ Fortune denies : at least my fall shall be  
‘ Praised by Pompeius. Shatter with your breasts  
‘ Their weapons ; blunt the edges of their swords 190  
‘ With throats unyielding. In the distant lines  
‘ The dust is seen already, and the sound  
‘ Of tumult and of ruin finds the ear  
‘ Of Cæsar : strike ; the victory is ours :  
‘ For he shall come who while his soldiers die  
‘ Shall make the fortress his.’ His voice calls forth  
The courage that the trumpets failed to rouse  
When first they rang : his comrades mustering come  
To watch his deeds ; and, wondering at the man,  
To test if valour thus by foes oppressed, 200  
In narrow space, could hope for aught but death.  
But Scæva standing on the tottering bank  
Heaves from the brimming turret on the foe  
The corpses of the fallen ; the ruined mass  
Gives weapons to his hands ; with beams and poles  
And ponderous stones, with his own breast he threats  
His enemies ; and thrusts with mighty stakes  
The host advancing ; when they grasp the wall  
He lops the arm : rocks crush the foeman’s skull  
And rive the scalp asunder : fiery bolts 210  
Dashed at another set his hair aflame,  
Till rolls the greedy blaze about his eyes  
With hideous crackle. As the pile of slain  
Rose to the summit of the wall he sprang,  
Swift as across the nets a hunted pard,

Above the swords upraised, till in mid throng  
Of foes he stood, hemmed in by densest ranks  
And ramparted by war ; in front and rear,  
Where'er he struck, the victor. Now his sword  
Blunted with gore congealed no more could wound, 220  
But brake the stricken limb ; while every hand  
Flung every quivering dart at him alone ;  
Nor missed their aim, for rang against his shield  
Dart after dart unerring, and his helm  
In broken fragments pressed upon his brow ;  
His vital parts were safeguarded by spears  
That bristled in his body. Fortune saw  
Thus waged a novel combat, for there warred  
Against one man an army. Why with darts,  
Madmen, assail him and with slender shafts, 230  
'Gainst which his life is proof ? Or ponderous stones  
This warrior chief shall overwhelm, or bolts  
Flung by the twisted thongs of mighty slings.  
Let steel-shod ram or catapult remove  
This champion of the gate. No fragile wall  
Stands here for Cæsar, blocking with its bulk  
Pompeius' way to freedom. Now he trusts  
His shield no more, lest his sinister hand,  
Idle, give life by shame ; and on his breast  
Bearing a forest of spears, though spent with toil 240  
And worn with onset, falls upon his foe  
And braves alone the wounds of all the war.  
Thus may an elephant in Afric wastes,  
Oppressed by frequent darts, break those that fall  
Rebounding from his horny hide, and shake  
Those that find lodgment, while his life within  
Lies safe, protected, nor does spear avail  
To reach the fount of blood. Unnumbered wounds  
By arrow dealt, or lance, thus fail to slay



This single warrior. But lo ! from far 250

A Cretan archer's shaft, more sure of aim  
Than vows could hope for, strikes on Scæva's brow  
To light within his eye : the hero tugs  
Intrepid, bursts the nerves, and tears the shaft  
Forth with the eyeball, and with dauntless heel  
Treads them to dust. Not otherwise a bear  
Pannonian, fiercer for the wound received,  
Maddened by dart from Libyan thong propelled,  
Turns circling on her wound, and still pursues  
The weapon fleeing as she whirls around. 260

Thus, in his rage destroyed, his shapeless face  
Stood foul with crimson flow. 'The victors' shout  
Glad to the sky arose ; no greater joy  
A little blood could give them had they seen  
That Cæsar's self was wounded. Down he pressed  
Deep in his soul the anguish, and, with mien  
No longer bent on fight, submissive cried,

'Spare me, ye citizens ; remove the war  
'Far hence : no weapons now can haste my death ;  
'Draw from my breast the darts, but add no more. 270

'Yet raise me up to place me in the camp  
'Of Magnus, living : this your gift to him ;  
'No brave man's death my title to renown,  
'But Cæsar's flag deserted.' So he spake.

Unhappy Aulus thought his words were true,  
Nor saw within his hand the ready sword ;  
And leaping forth in haste to make his own  
The prisoner and his arms, in middle throat  
Received the lightning blade. By this one death  
Rose Scæva's valour again ; and thus he cried, 280

'Such be the punishment of all who thought  
'Great Scæva vanquished ; if Pompeius seeks  
'Peace from this reeking sword, low let him lay



‘ At Cæsar’s feet his standards. Me do ye think  
 ‘ Such as yourselves, and slow to meet the fates ?  
 ‘ Your love for Magnus and the Senate’s cause  
 ‘ Is less than mine for death.’ These were his words ;  
 And dust in columns proved that Cæsar came.  
 Thus was Pompeius’ glory spared the stain  
 Of flight compelled by Scæva. He, when ceased 290  
 The battle, fell, no more by rage of fight,  
 Or sight of blood out-pouring from his wounds,  
 Roused to the combat. Fainting there he lay  
 Upon the shoulders of his comrades borne,  
 Who him adoring (as though deity  
 Dwelt in his bosom) for his matchless deeds,  
 Plucked forth the gory shafts and took his arms  
 To deck the gods and shield the breast of Mars.  
 Thrice happy thou with such a name achieved,  
 Had but the fierce Iberian from thy sword, 300  
 Or heavy shielded Teuton, or had fled  
 The light Cantabrian : now no spoils of thine  
 Shall deck the Thunderer’s temple, nor upraise  
 The shout of triumph in the ways of Rome.  
 For all thy prowess, all thy deeds of pride  
 Do but prepare her lord.

Nor on this hand  
 Repulsed, Pompeius idly ceased from war,  
 Content within his bars ; but as the sea  
 Tireless, which tempests force upon the crag  
 That breaks it, or which gnaws a mountain side 310  
 Some day to fall in ruin on itself ;  
 He sought the turrets nearest to the main,  
 On double onset bent ; nor closely kept  
 His troops in hand, but on the spacious plain  
 Spread forth his camp. They joyful leave the tents  
 And wander at their will. Thus Padus flows

In brimming flood, and foaming at his bounds,  
Making whole districts quake ; and should the bank  
Fail 'neath his swollen waters, all his stream  
Breaks forth in swirling eddies over fields 320  
Not his before ; some lands are lost, the rest  
Gain from his bounty.

Hardly from his tower  
Had Cæsar seen the fire or known the fight :  
And coming found the rampart overthrown,  
The dust no longer stirred, the ruins cold  
As from a battle done. The peace that reigned  
There and on Magnus' side, as though men slept,  
Their victory won, aroused his angry soul.  
Quick he prepares, so that he end their joy  
Careless of slaughter or defeat, to rush 330  
With threatening columns on Torquatus' post.  
But swift as sailor, by his trembling mast  
Warned of Circean tempest, furls his sails,  
So swift Torquatus saw, and prompt to wage  
The war more closely, he withdrew his men  
Within a narrower wall.

Now past the trench  
Were Cæsar's companies, when from the hills  
Pompeius hurled his host upon their ranks  
Shut in, and hampered. Not so much o'erwhelmed  
As Cæsar's soldiers is the hind who dwells 340  
On Etna's slopes, when blows the southern wind,  
And all the mountain pours its cauldrons forth  
Upon the vale ; and huge Enceladus<sup>1</sup>  
Writhing beneath his load spouts o'er the plains  
A blazing torrent. Blinded by the dust,  
Encircled, vanquished, ere the fight, they fled  
In cloud of terror on their rearward foe,

<sup>1</sup> This giant, like Typhon, was buried under Mount Etna.

So rushing on their fates. Thus had the war  
 Shed its last drop of blood and peace ensued,  
 But Magnus suffered not, and held his troops 350  
 Back from the battle.

Thou, O Rome, hadst been  
 Free, happy, mistress of thy laws and rights  
 Were Sulla here. Now shalt thou ever grieve  
 That in his crowning crime, to have met in fight  
 A pious kinsman, Cæsar's vantage lay.  
 Oh tragic destiny ! Nor Munda's fight  
 Hispania had wept, nor Libya mourned  
 En crimsoned Utica, nor Nilus' stream,  
 With blood unspeakable polluted, borne  
 A nobler corse than her Egyptian kings : 360  
 Nor Juba<sup>1</sup> lain unburied on the sands,  
 Nor Scipio with his blood outpoured appeased  
 The ghosts of Carthage ; this had been thy last  
 Disaster, Rome ; nor had the blameless life  
 Of Cato ended : and Pharsalia's name  
 Had so been blotted from the book of fate.

But Cæsar left the region where his arms  
 Had found the deities adverse, and marched  
 His shattered columns to Thessalian lands.  
 Then to Pompeius came (whose mind was bent 370  
 To follow Cæsar wheresoe'er he fled)  
 His captains, striving to persuade their chief  
 To seek Ausonia, his native land,  
 Now freed from foes. ' Ne'er will I pass,' he said,  
 ' My country's limit, nor revisit Rome  
 ' Like Cæsar, at the head of banded hosts.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Juba and Petreius killed each other after the battle of Thapsus, to avoid falling into Cæsar's hands. See Book IV., line 5.

<sup>2</sup> So Cicero : ' Shall I, who have been called saviour of the city and father of my country, bring into it an army of Getæ Armenians and Colchians ? ' ( ' Ep. ad Atticum,' ix., 10.)

‘ Hesperia when the war began was mine ;  
‘ Mine, had I chosen in our country’s shrines,  
‘ In midmost forum of her capital,  
‘ To join the battle. So that banished far 380  
‘ Be war from Rome, I’ll cross the torrid zone  
‘ Or those for ever frozen Scythian shores.  
‘ What ! shall my victory rob thee of the peace  
‘ I gave thee by my flight ? Rather than thou  
‘ Shouldst feel the evils of this impious war,  
‘ Let Cæsar deem thee his.’ He turned his course  
Towards the uprising sun, and sought by paths  
Remote, and forests wide, the land by fate  
Foredoomed to see the issue of the war.

Thessalia on that side where Titan first 390  
Raises the wintry day, by Ossa’s rocks  
Is prisoned in : but in th’ advancing year  
When higher in the vault his chariot rides  
’Tis Pelion that meets the morning rays.  
And when beside the Lion’s flames he drives  
The middle course, Othrys with woody top  
Screens his chief ardour. On the hither side  
Pindus receives the breezes of the west  
And as the evening falls brings darkness in.  
There too Olympus, at whose foot who dwells 400  
Nor fears the north nor sees the shining bear.  
Between these mountains hemmed, in ancient time  
The fields were marsh, for Tempe’s pass not yet  
Was cleft, to give an exit to the streams  
’That filled the plain : but when Alcides’ hand  
Smote Ossa from Olympus at a blow,<sup>1</sup>  
And Nereus wondered at the sudden flood  
Of waters to the main, then on the shore  
(Would it had slept for ever ’neath the deep)

<sup>1</sup> See Book VIII., line 1.

Seaborn Achilles' home Pharsalus rose ;  
 And Phylacé<sup>1</sup> whence sailed that ship of old  
 Whose keel first touched upon the beach of Troy ;  
 And Dorion mournful for the Muses' ire  
 On Thamyris<sup>2</sup> vanquished : Trachis ; Melibé  
 Strong in the shafts<sup>3</sup> of Hercules, the price  
 Of that most awful torch ; Larissa's hold  
 Potent of yore ; and Argos,<sup>4</sup> famous erst,  
 O'er which men pass the ploughshare : and the spot  
 Fabled as Echionian Thebes,<sup>5</sup> where once  
 Agavé bore in exile to the pyre  
 (Grieving 'twas all she had) the head and neck  
 Of Pentheus massacred. The lake set free  
 Flowed forth in many rivers : to the west  
 Æas,<sup>6</sup> a gentle stream ; nor stronger flows  
 The sire of Isis ravished from his arms ;  
 And Achelous, rival for the hand  
 Of Cæneus' daughter, rolls his earthy flood<sup>7</sup>  
 To silt the shore beside the neighbouring isles.

410

420

<sup>1</sup> Protesilaus, from this place, first landed at Troy.

<sup>2</sup> Thamyris challenged the Muses to a musical contest, and being vanquished, was by them deprived of sight.

<sup>3</sup> The arrows given to Philoctetes by Hercules as a reward for kindling his funeral pyre.

<sup>4</sup> This is the Pelasgic, not the historical, Argos.

<sup>5</sup> Book I., line 635 ; Book VII., line 913. Agave was a daughter of Cadmus, and mother of Pentheus, king of the Bœotian Thebes. He was opposed to the mysterious worship of Dionysus, which his mother celebrated, and which he had watched from a tree. She tore him to pieces, being urged into a frenzy and mistaking him for a wild beast. She then retired to another Thebes, in Phthiotis, in triumph, with his head and shoulders. By another legend she did not leave the Bœotian Thebes. (See Grote, vol. i., p. 220. Edit. 1862.)

<sup>6</sup> Æas was a river flowing from the boundary of Thessaly through Epirus to the Ionian Sea. The sire of Isis, or Io, was Inachus ; but the river of that name is usually placed in the Argive territory.

<sup>7</sup> A river rising in Mount Pindus and flowing into the Ionian Sea nearly opposite to Ithaca. At its mouth the sea has been largely silted up.



Evenus <sup>1</sup> purpled by the Centaur's blood  
 Wanders through Calydon : in the Malian Gulf 430  
 Thy rapids fall, Spercheius : pure the wave  
 With which Amphrysos <sup>2</sup> irrigates the meads  
 Where once Apollo served : Anaurus <sup>3</sup> flows  
 Breathing no vapour forth ; no humid air  
 Ripples his surface : and whatever stream,  
 Nameless itself, to Ocean gives its waves  
 Through thee, Penëus : <sup>4</sup> whirled in eddies foams  
 Apidanus ; Enipeus lingers on  
 Swift only when fresh streams his volume swell :  
 And thus Asopus takes his ordered course, 440  
 Phœnix and Melas ; but Eurotas keeps  
 His stream aloof from that with which he flows,  
 Penëus, gliding on his top as though  
 Upon the channel. Fable says that, sprung  
 From darkest pools of Styx, with common floods  
 He scorns to mingle, mindful of his source,  
 So that the gods above may fear him still.

<sup>1</sup> The god of this river fought with Hercules for the hand of Deianira. After Hercules had been married to Deianira, and when they were on a journey, they came to the River Evenus. Here Nessus, a Centaur, acted as ferryman, and Hercules bade him carry Deianira across. In doing so he insulted her, and Hercules shot him with an arrow.

<sup>2</sup> Admetus was King of Phæræ in Thessaly, and sued for Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, who promised her to him if he should come in a chariot drawn by lions and boars. With the assistance of Apollo, Admetus performed this. Apollo, for the slaughter of the Cyclops, was condemned to serve a mortal, and accordingly he tended the flocks of Admetus for nine years. The River Amphrysos is marked as flowing into the Pagasæan Gulf at a short distance below Phæræ.

<sup>3</sup> Anaurus was a small river passing into the Pagasæan Gulf past Iolcos. In this river Jason is said to have lost one of his slippers.

<sup>4</sup> The River Peneus flowed into the sea through the pass of Tempe, cloven by Hercules between Olympus and Ossa (see line 406); and carried with it Asopus, Phœnix, Melas, Enipeus, Apidanus, and Titaresus (or Eurotas). The Styx is generally placed in Arcadia, but Lucan says that Eurotas rises from the Stygian pools, and that, mindful of this mysterious source, he refuses to mingle his streams with that of Peneus, in order that the gods may still fear to break an oath sworn upon his waters.



Soon as were sped the rivers, Bæbian ploughs  
 Dark with its riches broke the virgin soil ;  
 Then came Lelegians to press the share, 450  
 And Dolopes and sons of Æolus  
 By whom the glebe was furrowed. Steed-renowned  
 Magnetians dwelt there, and the Minyan race  
 Who smote the sounding billows with the oar.  
 There in the cavern from the pregnant cloud  
 Ixion's sons found birth, the Centaur brood  
 Half beast, half human : Monychus who broke  
 The stubborn rocks of Pholoe, Rhætus fierce  
 Hurling from Cæta's top gigantic elms  
 Which northern storms could hardly overturn ; 460  
 Pholus, Alcides' host : Nessus who bore  
 The Queen across Evenus' <sup>1</sup> waves, to feel  
 The deadly arrow for his shameful deed ;  
 And aged Chiron <sup>2</sup> who with wintry star  
 Against the huger Scorpion draws his bow.  
 Here sparkled on the land the warrior seed ; <sup>3</sup>  
 Here leaped the charger from Thessalian rocks <sup>4</sup>  
 Struck by the trident of the Ocean King,  
 Omen of dreadful war ; here first he learned,  
 Champing the bit and foaming at the curb, 470  
 Yet to obey his lord. From yonder shore

<sup>1</sup> See on line 429.

<sup>2</sup> Chiron, the aged Centaur, instructor of Peleus, Achilles, and others. He was killed by one of the poisoned arrows of Hercules, but placed by Zeus among the stars as the Archer, from which position he appears to be aiming at the Scorpion. His constellation appears in winter.

<sup>3</sup> The teeth of the dragon slain by Cadmus ; though this took place in Bœotia.

<sup>4</sup> Poseidon and Athena disputed as to which of them should name the capital of Attica. The gods gave the reward to that one of them who should produce the thing most useful to man ; whereupon Athena produced an olive tree, and Poseidon a horse. Homer also places the scene of this event in Thessaly. (Iliad, xxiii., 247.)

The keel of pine first floated,<sup>1</sup> and bore men  
To dare the perilous chance of seas unknown :  
And here Ionus ruler of the land  
First from the furnace molten masses drew  
Of iron and brass ; here first the hammer fell  
To weld them, shapeless ; here in glowing stream  
Ran silver forth and gold, soon to receive  
The minting stamp. 'Twas thus that money came  
Whereby men count their riches, cause accursed 480  
Of warfare. Hence came down that Python huge  
On Cirrha : hence the laurel wreath which crowns  
The Pythian victor : here Aloeus' sons  
Gigantic rose against the gods, what time  
Pelion had almost touched the stars supreme,  
And Ossa's loftier peak amid the sky  
Opposing, barred the constellations' way.

When in this fated land the chiefs had placed  
Their several camps, foreboding of the end  
Now fast approaching, all men's thoughts were turned 490  
Upon the final issue of the war.  
And as the end drew near, all coward minds  
Trembling beneath the shadow of the fate  
Now hanging o'er them, deemed disaster near :  
While some took heart ; yet doubted what might fall,  
In hope and fear alternate. 'Mid the throng  
Sextus, unworthy son of worthy sire  
Who soon upon the waves that Scylla guards,<sup>2</sup>  
Sicilian pirate, exile from his home,  
Stained by his deeds of shame the fights he won, 500  
Could bear delay no more ; his feeble soul,  
Sick of uncertain fate, by fear compelled,  
Forecast the future : yet consulted not

The Argo. Conf. Book III., 225.

<sup>2</sup> See Book VII., 1029.

The shrine of Delos nor the Pythian caves ;  
Nor was he satisfied to learn the sound  
Of Jove's brass cauldron, 'mid Dodona's oaks,  
By her primæval fruits the nurse of men :  
Nor sought he sages who by flight of birds,  
Or watching with Assyrian care the stars  
And fires of heaven, or by victims slain, 510  
May know the fates to come ; nor any source  
Lawful though secret. For to him was known  
That which excites the hate of gods above ;  
Magicians' lore, the savage creed of Dis  
And all the shades ; and sad with gloomy rites  
Mysterious altars. For his frenzied soul  
Heaven knew too little. And the spot itself  
Kindled his madness, for hard by there dwelt  
The brood of Hæmon <sup>1</sup> whom no storied witch  
Of fiction e'er transcended ; all their art 520  
In things most strange and most incredible ;  
There were Thessalian rocks with deadly herbs  
Thick planted, sensible to magic chants,  
Funereal, secret : and the land was full  
Of violence to the gods : the Queenly guest <sup>2</sup>  
From Colchis gathered here the fatal roots  
That were not in her store : hence vain to heaven  
Rise impious incantations, all unheard ;  
For deaf the ears divine : save for one voice  
Which penetrates the furthest depths of air 530  
Compelling e'en th' unwilling deities  
To hearken to its accents. Not the care  
Of the revolving sky or starry pole  
Can call them from it ever. Once the sound

<sup>1</sup> Son of Pelagus. From him was derived the ancient name of Thessaly, Hæmonia.

<sup>2</sup> Medea.

Of those dread tones unspeakable has reached  
 The constellations, then nor Babylon  
 Nor secret Memphis, though they open wide  
 The shrines of ancient magic and entreat  
 The gods, could draw them from the fires that smoke  
 Upon the altars of far Thessaly. 540  
 To hearts of flint those incantations bring  
 Love, strange, unnatural ; the old man's breast  
 Burns with illicit fire. Nor lies the power  
 In harmful cup nor in the juicy pledge  
 Of love maternal from the forehead drawn ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Charmed forth by spells alone the mind decays,  
 By poisonous drugs unharmed. With woven threads  
 Crossed in mysterious fashion do they bind  
 Those whom no passion born of beauteous form  
 Or loving couch unites. All things on earth 550  
 Change at their bidding ; night usurps the day ;  
 The heavens disobey their wonted laws ;  
 At that dread hymn the Universe stands still ;  
 And Jove while urging the revolving wheels  
 Wonders they move not. Torrents are outpoured  
 Beneath a burning sun ; and thunder roars  
 Uncaused by Jupiter. From their flowing locks  
 Vapours immense shall issue at their call ;  
 When falls the tempest seas shall rise and foam<sup>2</sup>  
 Moved by their spell ; though powerless the breeze 560  
 To raise the billows. Ships against the wind  
 With bellying sails move onward. From the rock  
 Hangs motionless the torrent : rivers run

<sup>1</sup> It was supposed that there was on the forehead of the new-born foal an excrescence, which was bitten off and eaten by the mother. If she did not do this she had no affection for the foal. (Virgil, 'Æneid,' iv., 515.)

<sup>2</sup> 'When the boisterous sea,

Without a breath of wind, hath knocked the sky.'

Ben Jonson's 'Masque of Queens.'

Uphill ; the summer heat no longer swells  
 Nile in his course ; Mæander's stream is straight ;  
 Slow Rhone is quickened by the rush of Saone ;  
 Hills dip their heads and topple to the plain ;  
 Olympus sees his clouds drift overhead ;  
 And sunless Scythia's sempiternal snows  
 Melt in mid-winter ; the inflowing tides 570  
 Driven onward by the moon, at that dread chant  
 Ebb from their course ; earth's axes, else unmoved,  
 Have trembled, and the force centripetal  
 Has tottered, and the earth's compacted frame  
 Struck by their voice has gaped, till through the void  
 Men saw the moving sky.<sup>1</sup> All beasts most fierce  
 And savage fear them, yet with deadly aid  
 Furnish the witches' arts. Tigers athirst  
 For blood, and noble lions on them fawn  
 With bland caresses : serpents at their word 580  
 Uncoil their circles, and extended glide  
 Along the surface of the frosty field ;  
 The viper's severed body joins anew ;  
 And dies the snake by human venom slain.

Whence comes this labour on the gods, compelled  
 To hearken to the magic chant and spells,  
 Nor daring to despise them ? Doth some bond  
 Control the deities ? Is their pleasure so,  
 Or must they listen ? and have silent threats  
 Prevailed, or piety unseen received 590  
 So great a guerdon ? Against all the gods  
 Is this their influence, or on one alone  
 Who to his will constrains the universe,  
 Himself constrained ? Stars most in yonder clime  
 Shoot headlong from the zenith ; and the moon

<sup>1</sup> The sky was supposed to move round, but to be restrained in its course by the planets. (See Book X., line 238.)



Gliding serene upon her nightly course  
Is shorn of lustre by their poisonous chant,  
Dimmed by dark earthly fires, as though our orb  
Shadowed her brother's radiance and barred  
The light bestowed by heaven ; nor freshly shines 600  
Until descending nearer to the earth  
She sheds her baneful drops upon the mead.

These sinful rites and these her sister's songs  
Abhorred Erichtho, fiercest of the race,  
Spurned for their piety, and yet viler art  
Practised in novel form. To her no home  
Beneath a sheltering roof—her direful head  
Thus to lay down were crime : deserted tombs  
Her dwelling-place, from which, darling of hell,  
She dragged the dead. Nor life nor gods forbad 610  
But that she knew the secret homes of Styx  
And learned to hear the whispered voice of ghosts  
At dread mysterious meetings.<sup>1</sup> Never sun  
Shed his pure light upon that haggard cheek  
Pale with the pallor of the shades, nor looked  
Upon those locks unkempt that crowned her brow.  
In starless nights of tempest crept the hag  
Out from her tomb to seize the levin bolt ;  
Treading the harvest with accursed foot  
She burned the fruitful growth, and with her breath 620  
Poisoned the air else pure. No prayer she breathed  
Nor supplication to the gods, nor knew  
The pulse of entrails : logs from flaming pyres  
She loves to cast on altars of the gods,  
And incense pilfered from the smoking tomb.

<sup>1</sup> 'Cœtus audire silentum.' To be present at the meetings of the dead and hear their voices. So, in the sixth Æneid, the dead Greek warriors in feeble tones endeavour to express their fright at the appearance of the Trojan hero (lines 492, 493).



The gods at her first utterance grant her prayer  
For things unlawful, lest they hear again  
Its fearful accents : men whose limbs were quick  
With vital power she thrust within the grave  
Despite the fates who owed them years to come : 630  
The funeral reversed brought from the tomb  
Those who were dead no longer ; and the pyre  
Yields to her shameless clutch still smoking dust  
And bones enkindled, torches which but now  
Some grieving father held, and fragments mixed  
In sable smoke and ceremental cloths  
Singed with the redolent fire that burned the dead.  
But those who lie within a stony cell  
Untouched by fire, whose dried and mummied frames  
No longer know corruption, limb by limb 640  
Venting her rage she tears, the bloodless eyes  
Drags from their cavities, and mauls the nail  
Upon the withered hand : she gnaws the noose  
By which some wretch has died, and from the tree  
Drags down a pendent corpse, its members torn  
Asunder to the winds : forth from the palms  
Wrenches the iron, and from the unbending bond  
Hangs by her teeth, and with her hands collects  
The slimy gore which drips upon the limbs.

Where lay a corpse upon the naked earth 650  
On ravening birds and beasts of prey the hag  
Kept watch, nor marred by knife or hand her spoil,  
Till on his victim seized some nightly wolf ;<sup>1</sup>  
Then dragged the morsel from his thirsty fangs ;  
Nor fears she murder, if some banquet fell  
Need blood fresh issued from the gaping throat,

<sup>1</sup> 'As if that piece were sweeter which the wolf had bitten.' Note to  
'The Masque of Queens,' in which the first hag says :

Or panting entrail. By unnatural means  
 Wombs yield to her the infant to be placed  
 On glowing altars : and whene'er she needs  
 Some fierce undaunted ghost, he fails not her 660  
 Who has all deaths in use. Her hand has chased  
 From smiling cheeks the rosy bloom of life ;  
 And with sinister hand from dying youth  
 Has shorn the fatal lock : and holding oft  
 In foul embraces some departed friend  
 Severed the head, and through the ghastly lips,  
 Held by her own apart, some impious tale  
 Dark with mysterious horror hath conveyed  
 Down to the darkness of the Stygian shades.

When Sextus first, through rumours of the place, 670  
 Heard of the hag, what time beneath the earth  
 'Titan was wheeling at full height, and here  
 Night in mid course, in quest of her he trod  
 Through desert fields. Meanwhile a faithful band,  
 His ministers of guilt, mid tombs and vaults  
 All ruined wandering, beheld the witch  
 Seated afar upon a lofty crag  
 Where Hæmus reaches out Pharsalian spurs.<sup>1</sup>  
 There was she proving for her gods and priests  
 Of magic, words unknown, and framing chants 680  
 Of dire and novel purpose : for she feared  
 Lest Mars should stray into another world,  
 And spare Thessalian soil the blood ere long  
 To flow in torrents ; and thus she forbade

' I have been all day, looking after  
 A raven feeding on a quarter,  
 And soon as she turned her beak to the south  
 I snatched this morsel out of her mouth.'—Ben Jonson.

But more probably the meaning is that the wolf's bite gave the flesh magical efficacy.

<sup>1</sup> Confusing Pharsalia with Philippi. (See line 685.)

Philippi's field, polluted with her song,  
 Thick with her poisonous distilments sown,  
 To let the war pass by. Such deaths, she hopes,  
 Soon shall be hers ! the blood of all the world  
 Shed for her use ! to her it shall be given  
 To sever from their trunks the heads of kings,  
 Plunder the ashes of the noble dead,  
 Italia's bravest, and in triumph add  
 The mightiest warriors to her host of shades.  
 This her sole toil, from Magnus' tombless corse  
 What she may snatch, on which of Cæsar's limbs  
 Her grasp may fasten.

690

To whom the coward son

Of Magnus thus : 'Thou greatest ornament  
 ' Of Hæmon's daughters, in whose power it lies  
 ' Or to reveal the fates, or from its course  
 ' To turn the future, be it mine to know  
 ' By thy sure utterance to what final end  
 ' Fortune now guides the issue. Not the least  
 ' Of all the Roman host on yonder plain  
 ' Am I, but Magnus' most illustrious son,  
 ' Lord of the world or heir to death and doom.  
 ' The unknown affrights me : I can firmly face  
 ' The certain terror. Bid my destiny  
 ' Yield to thy power the dark and hidden end,  
 ' And let me fall foreknowing. From the gods  
 ' Extort the truth, or, if thou spare the gods,  
 ' Force it from hell itself. Fling back the gates  
 ' That bar th' Elysian fields ; let Death confess  
 ' Whom from our ranks he seeks. No humble task  
 ' I bring, but worthy of Erichtho's skill  
 ' Of such a struggle fought for such a prize  
 ' To search and tell the issue.'

700

710

Then the witch

Pleased that her impious fame was noised abroad  
 Thus made her answer : ' If some lesser fates  
 ' Thy wish had been to change, against their wish  
 ' It had been easy to compel the gods 720  
 ' To its accomplishment. My art has power  
 ' When of one man the constellations press  
 ' The speedy death, to compass a delay ;  
 ' And mine it is, though every star decrees  
 ' A ripe old age, by mystic herbs to shear  
 ' The life midway. But should some purpose set  
 ' From the beginning of the universe,  
 ' And all the labouring fortunes of mankind,  
 ' Be brought in question, then Thessalian art  
 ' Bows to the power supreme. But if thou be 730  
 ' Content to know the issue pre-ordained,  
 ' Simple the task and plain ; for earth and air  
 ' And sea and space and Rhodopæan crags  
 ' Shall speak the future. Yet it easiest seems  
 ' Where death in these Thessalian fields abounds <sup>1</sup>  
 ' To raise a single corpse. From dead men's lips  
 ' Scarce cold, in fuller accents falls the voice ;  
 ' Not from some mummied frame in accents shrill  
 ' Uncertain to the ear.'

Thus spake the hag  
 And through redoubled night, a squalid veil 740  
 Swathing her pallid features, stole among  
 Unburied carcases. Fast fled the wolves,  
 The carrion birds with maw unsatisfied  
 Relaxed their talons, as with creeping step  
 She sought her prophet. Firm must be the flesh  
 As yet, though cold in death, and firm the lungs  
 Untouched by wound. Now in the balance hung  
 The fates of slain unnumbered ; had she striven

<sup>1</sup> The poet fills the plain with dead before the battle is fought.

Armies to raise and order back to life  
Whole ranks of warriors, the laws had failed 750  
Of Erebus ; and, summoned up from Styx,  
Its ghostly tenants had obeyed her call,  
And rising fought once more. At length the witch  
Picks out her victim with pierced throat agape  
Fit for her purpose. Gripped by pitiless hook  
O'er rocks she drags him to the mountain cave  
Accursed by her fell rites, that shall restore  
The dead man's life. Close to the hidden brink  
The land that girds the precipice of hell  
Sinks towards the depths : with ever falling leaves 760  
A wood o'ershadows, and a spreading yew  
Casts shade impenetrable. Foul decay  
Fills all the space, and in the deep recess  
Darkness unbroken, save by chanted spells,  
Reigns ever. Not where gape the misty jaws  
Of caverned Tænarus, the gloomy bound  
Of either world, through which the nether kings  
Permit the passage of the dead to earth,  
So poisonous, mephitic, hangs the air.  
Nay, though the witch had power to call the shades 770  
Forth from the depths, 'twas doubtful if the cave  
Were not a part of hell. Discordant hues  
Flamed on her garb as by a fury worn ;  
Bare was her visage, and upon her brow  
Dread vipers hissed, beneath her streaming locks  
In sable coils entwined. But when she saw  
The youth's companions trembling, and himself  
With eyes cast down, with visage as of death,  
Thus spake the witch : ' Forbid your craven souls  
' These fears to cherish : soon returning life 780  
' This frame shall quicken, and in tones which reach  
' Even the timorous ear shall speak the man.



‘ If I have power the Stygian lakes to show,  
‘ The bank that sounds with fire, the fury band,  
‘ And giants fettered, and the hound that shakes  
‘ Bristling with heads of snakes his triple head,  
‘ What fear is this that cringes at the sight  
‘ Of timid shivering shades ?’

Then to her prayer.

First through his gaping bosom blood she pours  
Still fervent, washing from his wounds the gore. 790  
Then copious poisons from the moon distils  
Mixed with all monstrous things which Nature’s pangs  
Bring to untimely birth ; the froth from dogs  
Stricken with madness, foaming at the stream ;  
A lynx’s entrails : and the knot that grows  
Upon the fell hyæna ; flesh of stags  
Fed upon serpents ; and the sucking fish  
Which holds the vessel back <sup>1</sup> though eastern winds  
Make bend the canvas ; dragon’s eyes ; and stones  
That sound beneath the brooding eagle’s wings. 800  
Nor Araby’s viper, nor the ocean snake  
Who in the Red Sea waters guards the shell,  
Are wanting ; nor the slough on Libyan sands  
By hornèd reptile cast ; nor ashes fail  
Snatched from an altar where the Phoenix died.  
And viler poisons many, which herself  
Has made, she adds, whereto no name is given :  
Pestiferous leaves pregnant with magic chants  
And blades of grass which in their primal growth  
Her cursed mouth had slimed. Last came her voice 810  
More potent than all herbs to charm the gods  
Who rule in Lethe. Dissonant murmurs first  
And sounds discordant from the tongues of men

<sup>1</sup> One of the miraculous stories to be found in Pliny’s ‘ Natural History.’  
See Lecky’s ‘ Augustus to Charlemagne,’ vol. i., p. 370.



She utters, scarce articulate : the bay  
 Of wolves, and barking as of dogs, were mixed  
 With that fell chant ; the screech of nightly owl  
 Raising her hoarse complaint ; the howl of beast  
 And sibilant hiss of snake—all these were there ;  
 And more—the wail of waters on the rock,  
 The sound of forests and the thunder peal. 820

Such was her voice ; but soon in clearer tones  
 Reaching to Tartarus, she raised her song :

- Ye awful goddesses, avenging power
- Of Hell upon the damned, and Chaos huge
- Who striv'st to mix innumerable worlds,
- And Pluto, king of earth, whose weary soul
- Grieves at his godhead ; Styx ; and plains of bliss
- We may not enter : and thou, Proserpine,
- Hating thy mother and the skies above,
- My patron goddess, last and lowest form <sup>1</sup> 830
- Of Hecatè, through whom the shades and I
- Hold silent converse ; warder of the gate
- Who castest human offal to the dog :
- Ye sisters who shall spin the threads again ; <sup>2</sup>
- And thou, O boatman of the burning wave,
- Now wearied of the shades from hell to me
- Returning, hear me if with voice I cry
- Abhorred, polluted ; if the flesh of man
- Hath ne'er been absent from my proffered song,
- Flesh washed with brains still quivering ; if the child 840
- Whose severed head I placed upon the dish
- But for this hand had lived—a listening ear
- Lend to my supplication ! From the caves
- Hid in the innermost recess of hell

<sup>1</sup> The mysterious goddess Hecate was identified with Luna in heaven, Diana on earth, and Proserpine in the lower regions. The text is doubtful.

<sup>2</sup> That is, for the second life of her victim.

‘ I claim no soul long banished from the light.  
‘ For one but now departed, lingering still  
‘ Upon the brink of Orcus, is my prayer.  
‘ Grant (for ye may) that listening to the spell  
‘ Once more he seek his dust ; and let the shade  
‘ Of this our soldier perished (if the war  
850  
‘ Well at your hands has merited), proclaim  
‘ The destiny of Magnus to his son.’

Such prayers she uttered ; then upraised her head  
And foaming lips, and present saw the ghost.  
Hard by he stood, beside the hated corpse  
His ancient prison, and loathed to enter in.  
There was the yawning chest where fell the blow  
That was his death ; and yet the gift supreme  
Of death, his right, (Ah, wretch !) was reft away.  
Angered at Death the witch, and at the pause  
860  
Conceded by the fates, with living snake  
Scourges the nerveless corse ; and on the dead  
She barks through fissures gaping to her song,  
Breaking the silence of their gloomy home :  
‘ Tisiphone, Megæra, heed ye not ?  
‘ Flies not this wretched soul before your whips  
‘ The void of Erebus ? By your very names,  
‘ She-dogs of hell, I’ll call you to the day,  
‘ Not to return ; through sepulchres and death  
‘ Your gaoler : from funereal urns and tombs  
870  
‘ I’ll chase you forth. And thou, too, Hecatè,  
‘ Who to the gods in comely shape and mien,  
‘ Not that of Erebus, appear’st, henceforth  
‘ Wasted and pallid as thou art in hell  
‘ At my command shalt come. I’ll noise abroad  
‘ The banquet that beneath the solid earth  
‘ Holds thee, thou maid of Enna ; by what bond  
‘ Thou lov’st night’s King, by what mysterious stain

‘ Infected, so that Ceres fears from hell  
‘ To call her daughter. And for thee, base king, 880  
‘ Titan shall pierce thy caverns with his rays  
‘ And sudden day shall smite thee. Do ye hear ?  
‘ Or shall I summon to mine aid that god  
‘ At whose dread name earth trembles ; who can look  
‘ Unflinching on the Gorgon’s head, and drive  
‘ The Furies with his scourge, who holds the depths  
‘ Ye cannot fathom, and above whose haunts  
‘ Ye dwell supernal ; who by waves of Styx  
‘ Forswears himself unpunished ? ’

Then the blood  
Grew warm and liquid, and with softening touch 890  
Cherished the stiffened wounds and filled the veins,  
Till throbbed once more the slow returning pulse  
And every fibre trembled, as with death  
Life was commingled. Then, not limb by limb,  
With toil and strain, but rising at a bound  
Leaped from the earth erect the living man.  
Fierce glared his eyes uncovered, and the life  
Was dim, and still upon his face remained  
The pallid hues of hardly parted death.  
Amazement seized upon him, to the earth 900  
Brought back again : but from his lips tight drawn  
No murmur issued ; he had power alone  
When questioned to reply. ‘ Speak,’ quoth the hag,  
‘ As I shall bid thee ; great shall be thy gain  
‘ If true thine answers, freed for evermore  
‘ From all Hæmonian art. Such burial place  
‘ Shall now be thine, and on thy funeral pyre  
‘ Such fatal woods shall burn, such chant shall sound,  
‘ That to thy ghost no more or magic song  
‘ Or spell shall reach, and thy Lethæan sleep 910  
‘ Shall never more be broken in a death

‘ From me received anew : for such reward  
‘ Think not this second life enforced in vain.  
‘ Obscure may be the answers of the gods  
‘ By priestess spoken at the holy shrine ;  
‘ But whoso braves the oracles of death  
‘ In search of truth, should gain a sure response.  
‘ Then speak, I pray thee. Let the hidden fates  
‘ Tell through thy voice the mysteries to come.’

Thus spake she, and her words by mystic force 920

Gave him his answer ; but with gloomy mien,  
And tears swift flowing, thus he made reply :  
‘ Called from the margin of the silent stream  
‘ I saw no fateful sisters spin the threads.  
‘ Yet know I this, that ’mid the Roman shades  
‘ Reigns fiercest discord ; and this impious war  
‘ Destroys the peace that ruled the fields of death.  
‘ Elysian meads and deeps of Tartarus  
‘ In paths diverse the Roman chieftains leave  
‘ And thus disclose the fates. The blissful ghosts 930  
‘ Bear visages of sorrow. Sire and son  
‘ The Decii, who gave themselves to death  
‘ In expiation of their country’s doom,  
‘ And great Camillus, wept ; and Sulla’s shade  
‘ Complained of fortune. Scipio bewailed  
‘ The scion of his race about to fall  
‘ In sands of Libya : Cato, greatest foe  
‘ To Carthage, grieves for that indignant soul  
‘ Which shall disdain to serve. Brutus alone  
‘ In all the happy ranks I smiling saw, 940  
‘ First consul when the kings were thrust from Rome.  
‘ The chains were fallen from boastful Catiline.  
‘ Him too I saw rejoicing, and the pair  
‘ Of Marii, and Cethegus’ naked arm.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Book II., 611.

' The Drusi, heroes of the people, joyed,  
 ' In laws immoderate ; and the famous pair <sup>1</sup>  
 ' Of greatly daring brothers : guilty bands  
 ' By bars eternal shut within the doors  
 ' That close the prison of hell, applaud the fates,  
 ' Claiming the plains Elysian : and the King 950  
 ' Throws wide his pallid halls, makes hard the points  
 ' Of craggy rocks, and forges iron chains,  
 ' The victor's punishment. But take with thee  
 ' This comfort, youth, that there a calm abode,  
 ' And peaceful, waits thy father and his house.  
 ' Nor let the glory of a little span  
 ' Disturb thy boding heart : the hour shall come  
 ' When all the chiefs shall meet. Shrink not from death,  
 ' But glorying in the greatness of your souls,  
 ' E'en from your humble sepulchres descend, 960  
 ' And tread beneath your feet, in pride of place,  
 ' The wandering phantoms of the gods of Rome.<sup>2</sup>  
 ' Which chieftain's tomb by Tiber shall be laved,  
 ' And which by Nile ; their fate, and theirs alone,  
 ' This battle shall decide. Nor seek to know  
 ' From me thy fortunes : for the fates in time  
 ' Shall give thee all thy due ; and thy great sire,<sup>3</sup>  
 ' A surer prophet, in Sicilian fields  
 ' Shall speak thy future—doubting even he  
 ' What regions of the world thou shouldst avoid 970  
 ' And what shouldst seek. O miserable race !  
 ' Europe and Asia and Libya's plains,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Gracchi, the younger of whom aimed at being a perpetual tribune, and was in some sort a forerunner of the Emperors.

<sup>2</sup> That is, the Cæsars, who will be in Tartarus.

<sup>3</sup> Referring probably to an episode intended to be introduced in a later book, in which the shade of Pompeius was to foretell his fate to Sextus.

<sup>4</sup> Cnæus was killed in Spain after the battle of Munda ; Sextus at Miletus ; Pompeius himself, of course, in Egypt.

‘ Which saw your conquests, now shall hold alike  
‘ Your burial-place—nor has the earth for you  
‘ A happier land than this.’

His task performed,

He stands in mournful guise, with silent look

Asking for death again ; yet could not die

Till mystic herb and magic chant prevailed.

For nature’s law, once used, had power no more

To slay the corpse and set the spirit free.

980

With plenteous wood she builds the funeral pyre

To which the dead man comes : then as the flames

Seized on his form outstretched, the youth and witch

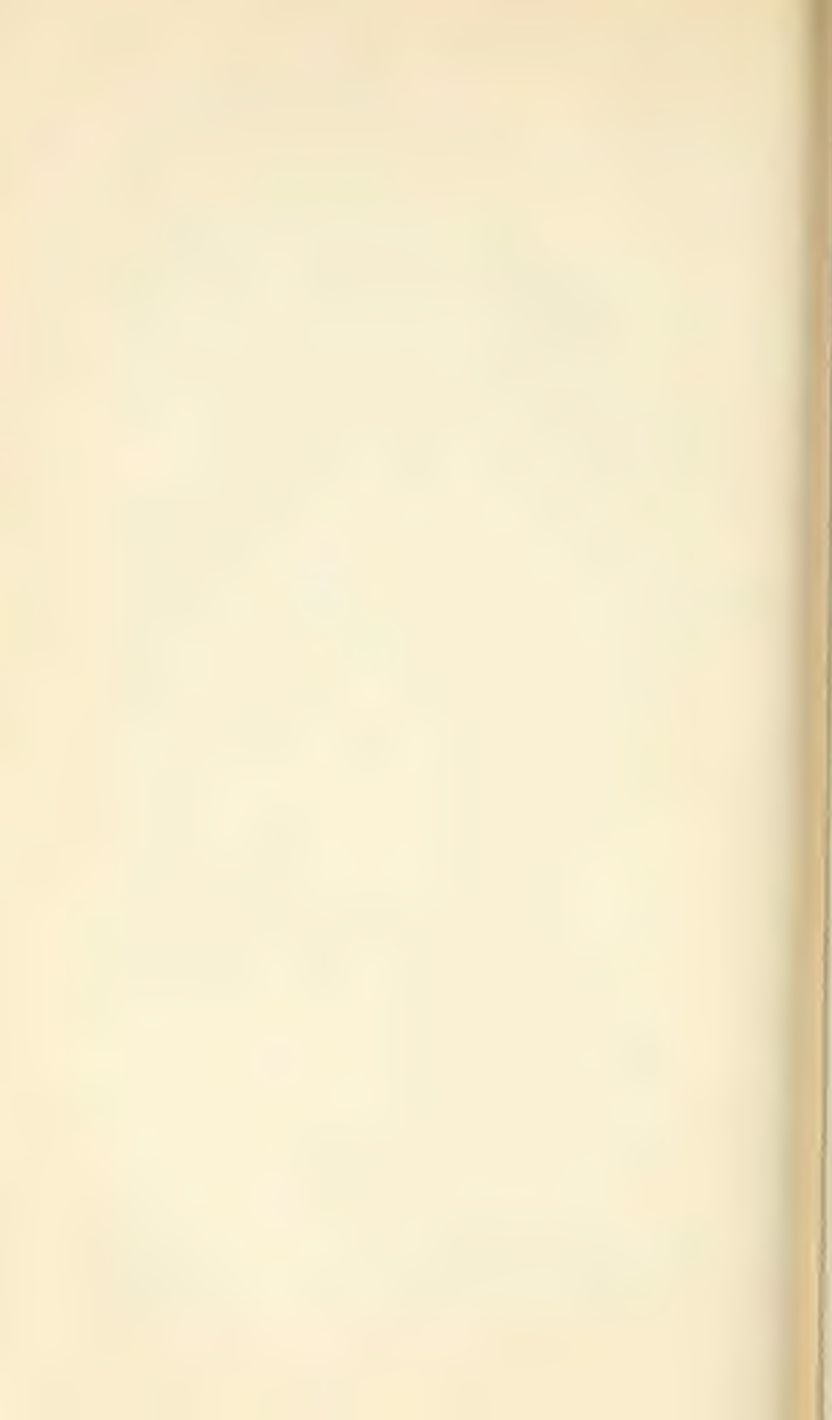
Together sought the camp ; and as the dawn

Now streaked the heavens, by the hag’s command

The day was stayed till Sextus reached his tent,

And mist and darkness veiled his safe return.





BOOK VII

THE BATTLE

The eve of the battle of Pharsalia and the dream of Pompeius, lines 1-53. The soldiers demand a battle, and are supported by Cicero in a speech, 54-100. Pompeius yields; his speech, 101-144. Prodigies, 145-248. Pompeius' order of battle, 249-272. Cæsar rejoices and addresses his troops, 273-399. Pompeius' speech, 400-457. Reflections on the result of the battle, 458-545. Defeat of Pompeius, 546-644. Cæsar in the fight, 645-678. Address to Brutus, 678-691. Death of Domitius, 691-716. Lament over the battle, 716-753. Pompeius flies, 753-855. Cæsar occupies Pompeius' camp and leaves the dead unburied, 855-972, which are devoured by birds and beasts, 973-997. Apostrophe to Thessaly, 998-1028. — ✓

## BOOK VII

### THE BATTLE

NE’ER to the summons of the Eternal laws  
More slowly Titan rose,<sup>1</sup> nor drave his steeds,  
Forced by the sky revolving,<sup>2</sup> up the heaven,  
With gloomier presage ; wishing to endure  
The pangs of ravished light, and dark eclipse ;  
And drew the mists up, not to feed his flames,<sup>3</sup>  
But lest his light upon Thessalian earth  
Might fall undimmed.

Pompeius on that morn,  
To him the latest day of happy life,  
In troubled sleep an empty dream conceived. 10  
For in the watches of the night he heard  
Innumerable Romans shout his name  
Within his theatre ; the benches vied  
To raise his fame and place him with the gods ;  
As once in youth, when victory was won  
O’er conquered tribes whom swift Iberus girds,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is, methinks, a morning full of fate !  
It riseth slowly, as her sullen car  
Had all the weight of sleep and death hung at it !

And her sick head is bound about with clouds  
As if she threatened night ere noon of day.

Ben Jonson, ‘Catiline,’ i., 1.

<sup>2</sup> See Book VI., 576.

<sup>3</sup> As to the sun finding fuel in the clouds, see Book I., line 472.

<sup>4</sup> Pompeius triumphed first in 81 B.C. for his victories in Sicily and Africa, at the age of twenty-four. Sulla at first objected, but

And when Sertorius' armies fought and fled,  
He sat triumphant for the west subdued,  
In pure white gown, and heard the Senate cheer ;  
No less majestic as a Roman knight 20  
Than had the purple robe adorned his car.  
Perhaps, as ills drew near, his anxious soul,  
Shunning the future, wooed the happy past ;  
Or, as is wont, prophetic slumber showed  
That which was not to be, by doubtful forms  
Misleading ; or as envious Fate forbade  
Return to Italy, this glimpse of Rome  
Kind Fortune gave. Break not his latest sleep,  
Ye sentinels ; let not the trumpet call  
Strike on his ear : for on the morrow's night 30  
Shapes of the battle lost, of death and war  
Shall crowd his rest with terrors. Whence shalt thou  
The poor man's happiness of sleep regain ?  
Happy if thus, e'en thus, thy Rome could see  
Once more her captain ! Would the gods had given  
To thee and to thy country one day yet  
To reap the latest fruit of such a love :  
Though sure of fate to come ! Thou marchest on  
As though by heaven ordained in Rome to die ;  
She, conscious ever of her prayers for thee 40  
Heard by the gods, deemed not the fates decreed  
Such evil destiny, that she should lose  
The last sad solace of her Magnus' tomb.  
Then young and old had blent their tears for thee,  
And child unbidden ; women torn their hair  
And struck their bosoms as for Brutus dead.

finally yielded and said, 'Let him triumph then in God's name.' The triumph for the defeat of Sertorius was not till 71 B.C., in which year Pompeius was elected Consul along with Crassus. (Compare Book IX., 706.)

E'en now though trembling at the victor's sword,  
Though cruel Cæsar herald thy defeat,  
Yet shall they grieve, while at the Thunderer's throne  
They offer incense and the laurel wreath. 50  
Ah, wretched fate ! In silence must they groan ;  
Nor in that theatre which heard thy praise  
Proclaim their sorrow for Pompeius dead.

The stars had fled before the growing morn,  
When eager voices (as the fates drew on  
The world to ruin) round Pompeius' tent  
Ask for the signal. What ! shall those condemned  
To die ere fall of eve, provoke the hour  
Of hastening death, demand the fatal doom  
Their own, their country's ? 'Magnus fears,' they cry, 60  
'He's patient of his kinsman, slow to strike,  
'And fondly holds beneath his sway the world ;  
'So dreads a peace.' And kings from Orient lands,  
And peoples, eager for their distant homes,  
Already murmured at the lengthy war.

Thus has it pleased the gods, when woe impends  
On guilty men, to make them seem its cause.  
We court disaster, crave the fatal sword.  
Of Magnus' camp Pharsalia was the prayer ;  
For Tullius, of all the sons of Rome 70  
Chief orator, beneath whose civil rule  
Fierce Catiline at the peace-compelling axe  
Trembled and fled, arose, to Magnus' ear  
Bearing the voice of all. To him was war  
Grown hateful, and he longed once more to hear  
The Senate's plaudits ; and with eloquent lips  
He lent persuasion to the weaker cause.  
'Fortune, Pompeius, for her gifts to thee  
'Asks this one boon, that thou shouldst use her now.  
'Here at thy feet thy leading captains lie ; 80



' And here thy monarchs, and a suppliant world  
 ' Entreats thee prostrate for thy kinsman's fall.  
 ' So long shall Cæsar plunge the world in war ?  
 ' Swift was thy tread when these proud nations fell ;  
 ' How deep their shame, and justly, should delay  
 ' Now mar thy conquests ! Where thy trust in Fate,  
 ' Thy fervour where ? Ingrate ! Dost dread the gods,  
 ' Or think they favour not the Senate's cause ?  
 ' Thy troops unbidden shall the standards seize  
 ' And conquer ; thou in shame be forced to win. 90  
 ' If at the Senate's orders and for us  
 ' The war is waged, then give to us the right  
 ' To choose the battle-field. Why dost thou keep  
 ' From Cæsar's throat the swords of all the world ?  
 ' The weapon quivers in the eager hand :  
 ' Scarce one awaits the signal. Strike at once,  
 ' Or without thee the trumpets sound the fray.  
 ' Art thou the Senate's comrade or her lord ?  
 ' We wait your answer.'

But Pompeius groaned ;

His mind was adverse, but he felt the fates 100  
 Opposed his wish, and knew the hand divine.  
 ' Since all desire it, and the fates prevail,  
 ' So let it be ; your leader now no more,  
 ' I share the labours of the battle-field.  
 ' Let Fortune roll the nations of the earth  
 ' In one red ruin ; myriads of mankind  
 ' See their last sun to-day. Yet, Rome, I swear,  
 ' This day of blood was forced upon thy son.  
 ' Without a wound, the prizes of the war  
 ' Might have been thine, and he who broke the peace 110  
 ' In peace forgotten. Whence this lust for crime ?  
 ' Shall bloodless victories in civil war  
 ' Be shunned, not sought ? We've ravished from our foe

‘ All boundless seas, and land ; his starving troops  
‘ Have snatched earth’s crop half-grown, in vain attempt  
‘ Their hunger to appease ; they prayed for death,  
‘ Sought for the sword-thrust, and within our ranks  
‘ Were fain to mix their life-blood with your own.  
‘ Much of the war is done : the conscript youth  
‘ Whose heart beats high, who burns to join the fray 120  
‘ (Though men fight hard in terror of defeat),  
‘ The shock of onset need no longer fear.  
‘ Bravest is he who promptly meets the ill  
‘ When fate commands it and the moment comes,  
‘ Yet brooks delay, in prudence ; and shall we,  
‘ Our happy state enjoying, risk it all ?  
‘ Trust to the sword the fortunes of the world ?  
‘ Not victory, but battle, ye demand.  
‘ Do thou, O Fortune, of the Roman state  
‘ Who mad’st Pompeius guardian, from his hands 130  
‘ Take back the charge grown weightier, and thyself  
‘ Commit its safety to the chance of war.  
‘ Nor blame nor glory shall be mine to-day.  
‘ Thy prayers unjustly, Cæsar, have prevailed :  
‘ We fight ! What wickedness, what woes on men,  
‘ Destruction on what realms this dawn shall bring !  
‘ Crimson with Roman blood yon stream shall run.  
‘ Would that (without the ruin of our cause)  
‘ The first fell bolt hurled on this cursèd day  
‘ Might strike me lifeless ! Victory to me 140  
‘ Were not more joyful, for this battle brings  
‘ A name of pity or a name of hate.  
‘ The loser bears the burden of defeat ;  
‘ The victor wins, but conquest is a crime.’

Thus to the soldiers, burning for the fray,  
He yields, forbidding, and throws down the reins.  
So may a sailor give the winds control

Upon his barque, which, driven by the seas,  
 Bears him an idle burden. Now the camp  
 Hums with impatience, and the brave man's heart 150  
 With beats tumultuous throbs against his breast ;  
 And all the host had standing in their looks <sup>1</sup>  
 The paleness of the death that was to come.<sup>1</sup>  
 On that day's fight 'twas manifest that Rome  
 And all the future destinies of man  
 Hung trembling ; and by weightier dread possessed,  
 They knew not danger. Who would fear for self  
 Should ocean rise and whelm the mountain tops,  
 And sun and sky descend upon the earth  
 In universal chaos ? Every mind 160  
 Is bent upon Pompeius, and on Rome.  
 They trust no sword until its deadly point  
 Glows on the sharpening stone ; no lance will serve  
 Till straightened for the fray ; each bow is strung  
 Anew, and arrows chosen for their work  
 Fill all the quivers ; horsemen try the curb  
 And fit the bridle rein and whet the spur.  
 If toils divine with human may compare,  
 'Twas thus, when Phlegra bore the giant crew,<sup>2</sup>  
 In Etna's furnace glowed the sword of Mars, 170  
 Neptunus' trident felt the flame once more ;  
 And great Apollo after Python slain  
 Sharpened his darts afresh : on Pallas' shield  
 Was spread anew the dread Medusa's hair ;  
 And for the battle in Pallene's fields  
 The Cyclops forged new thunderbolts for Jove.  
 Yet Fortune failed not, as they sought the field,  
 In various presage of the ills to come ;

<sup>1</sup> These two lines are taken from Ben Jonson's 'Catiline,' act v., scene 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Book IV., 668. 'Pallene' (line 175) is to be understood as meaning Phlegra.

All heaven opposed their march : portentous fire  
 In columns filled the plain, and torches blazed : 180  
 And thirsty whirlwinds mixed with meteor bolts  
 Smote on them as they strode, whose sulphurous flames  
 Perplexed the vision. Crests were struck from helmets ;  
 The melted sword-blade flowed upon the hilt :  
 The spear ran liquid, and the hurtful steel  
 Smoked with a sulphur that had come from heaven.  
 Nay, more, the standards, hid by swarms of bees  
 Innumerable, weighed the bearer down,  
 Scarce lifted from the earth ; bedewed with tears ;  
 No more of Rome the standards,<sup>1</sup> or her state. 190  
 And from the altar fled the frantic bull  
 To fields afar ; nor was a victim found  
 To grace the sacrifice of coming doom.

But thou, O Cæsar, to what gods of ill  
 Didst thou appeal ? What furies didst thou call,  
 What powers of madness and what Stygian Kings  
 Whelmed in th' abyss of hell ? Didst favour gain  
 By sacrifice in this thine impious war ?  
 Strange sights were seen ; or caused by hands divine  
 Or due to fearful fancy. Hæmus' top 200  
 Plunged headlong in the valley, Pindus met  
 With high Olympus, while at Ossa's feet  
 Red ran Bœbœis,<sup>2</sup> and Pharsalia's field  
 Gave warlike voices as in depth of night.  
 Now darkness came upon their wondering gaze,  
 Now daylight pale and wan, their helmets wreathed  
 In pallid mist ; the spirits of their sires  
 Hovered in air, and shades of kindred dead  
 Passed flitting through the gloom. Yet had the host,

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth to be the standards of the Emperor.

<sup>2</sup> A lake at the foot of Mount Ossa. Pindus, Ossa, Olympus, and, above all, Hæmus (the Balkans) were at a long distance from Pharsalia. Comp. Book VI., 678.

Conscious of guilty prayers, and of the hope 210  
 To do to death their brothers and their sires,  
 One solace : that they found in hearts amazed  
 With horrors, and in earth and air distraught,  
 A happy omen of the crimes to come.

Was't strange that peoples whom their latest day  
 Of happy life awaited (if the mind  
 Of man foreknows) should tremble with affright ?  
 Romans who dwelt by far Araxes' stream,  
 And Tyrian Gades,<sup>1</sup> in whatever clime,  
 'Neath every sky, struck by mysterious dread 220  
 Were plunged in sorrow—yet rebuked the tear,  
 For yet they knew not of the fatal day.  
 Thus on Euganean hills<sup>2</sup> where sulphurous fumes  
 Disclose the rise of Aponus<sup>3</sup> from earth,  
 And where Timavus broadens in the meads,  
 An augur spake : 'The last great day is come ;  
 'To-day in battle meet the impious arms  
 'Of Cæsar and of Magnus.' Or he saw  
 The bolts of Jupiter, predicting ill ;  
 Or else the sky discordant o'er the space 230  
 Of heaven, from pole to pole ; or else perchance  
 The sun was sad and misty in the height  
 And told the battle by his wasted beams.  
 By Nature's fiat that Thessalian day

<sup>1</sup> Gades (Cadiz) is stated to have been founded by the Phœnicians about 1000 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> This alludes to the story told by Plutarch ('Cæsar,' 47), that, at Patavium, Caius Cornelius, a man reputed for skill in divination, and a friend of Livy the historian, was sitting to watch the birds that day. 'And first of all (as Livius says) he discovered the time of the battle, and he said to those present that the affair was now deciding and the men were going into action. Looking again, and observing the signs, he sprang up with enthusiasm and called out, "You conquer, Cæsar."' (Long's translation.)

<sup>3</sup> The Fontes Aponi were warm springs near Padua. An altar, inscribed to Apollo Aponus, was found at Ribchester, and is now at St. John's College, Cambridge. (Wright, 'Celt, Roman, and Saxon,' p. 320.)



Passed not as others ; if the gifted sense  
Of reading portents had been given to all,  
All men had known Pharsalia. Gods of heaven !  
How do ye mark the great ones of the earth !  
The world gives tokens of their weal or woe ;  
The sky records their fates : in distant climes 240  
To future races shall their tale be told,  
Or by the fame alone of mighty deeds  
Had in remembrance, or by this my care  
Borne through the centuries : and men shall read  
In hope and fear the story of the war  
And breathless pray, as though it were to come,  
For that long since accomplished ; and for thee  
E'en then, Pompeius, shall that prayer be given.

Reflected from their arms, th' opposing sun  
Filled all the slope with radiance as they marched 250  
In ordered ranks to that ill-fated fight,  
And stood arranged for battle. On the left  
Thou, Lentulus, hadst charge ; two legions there,  
The fourth, and bravest of them all, the first :  
While on the right, Domitius, ever stanch,  
Though fates be adverse, stood : in middle line  
The hardy soldiers from Cilician lands,  
In Scipio's care ; their chief in Libyan days,  
To-day their comrade. By Enipeus' pools  
And by the rivulets, the mountain troops 260  
Of Cappadocia, and loose of rein  
Thy squadrons, Pontus : on the firmer ground  
Galatia's tetrarchs and the greater kings ;  
And all the purple-robed, the slaves of Rome.  
Numidian hordes were there from Afric shores,  
There Creta's host and Ituræans found  
Full space to wing their arrows ; there the tribes  
From brave Iberia clashed their shields, and there



Gaul stood arrayed against her ancient foe.

Let all the nations be the victor's prize, 270

None grace in future a triumphal car ;

This fight demands the slaughter of a world.

Cæsar that day to send his troops for spoil

Had left his tent, when on the further hill

Behold ! his foe descending to the plain.

The moment asked for by a thousand prayers

Is come, which puts his fortune on the risk

Of imminent war, to win or lose it all.

For burning with desire of kingly power

His eager soul ill brooked the small delay 280

This civil war compelled : each instant lost

Robbed from his due ! But when at length he knew

The last great conflict come, the fight supreme,

Whose prize the leadership of all the world :

And felt the ruin nodding to its fall :

Swiftest to strike, yet for a little space

His rage for battle failed ; the spirit bold

To pledge itself the issue, wavered now :

For Magnus' fortunes gave no room for hope,

Though Cæsar's none for fear. Deep in his soul 290

Such doubt was hidden, as to rouse the throng

He spake of victory : ' Ye men of Rome

' Who made my fortunes, host that won the world !

' Prayed for so oft, the dawn of fight is come.

' No more entreat the gods : with sword in hand

' Seize on our fates ; and Cæsar in your deeds

' This day is great or little. This the day

' For which I hold since Rubicon was passed

' Your promise given : for this we flew to arms : <sup>1</sup>

' For this deferred the triumphs which we won, 300

' And which the foe forbad : this gives you back

<sup>1</sup> See Book I., 412 and following lines.

‘ Your homes and kindred, and the peaceful farm,  
 ‘ Your prize for years of service in the field.  
 ‘ And by the fates’ command this day shall prove  
 ‘ Whose quarrel juster : for defeat is guilt <sup>1</sup>  
 ‘ To him on whom it falls. If in my cause  
 ‘ With fire and sword ye did your country wrong,  
 ‘ Strike for acquittal ! Should another judge  
 ‘ This war, not Cæsar, none were blameless found.  
 ‘ Not for my sake this battle, but for you, 310  
 ‘ To give you, soldiers, liberty and law  
 ‘ ‘Gainst all the world. Wishful myself for life  
 ‘ Apart from public cares, and for the gown  
 ‘ That robes the private citizen, I refuse  
 ‘ To yield from office till the law allows  
 ‘ Your right in all things. On my shoulders rest  
 ‘ All blame ; all power be yours. Nor deep the blood  
 ‘ Between yourselves and conquest. Grecian schools  
 ‘ Of exercise and wrestling <sup>2</sup> send us here  
 ‘ Their chosen darlings to await your swords ; 320  
 ‘ And scarcely armed for war, a dissonant crowd  
 ‘ Barbaric, that will start to hear our trump,  
 ‘ Nay, their own clamour. Not in civil strife  
 ‘ Your blows shall fall—the battle of to-day  
 ‘ Sweeps from the earth the enemies of Rome.  
 ‘ Dash through these cowards and their vaunted kings :  
 ‘ One stroke of sword and all the world is yours.  
 ‘ Make plain to all men that the crowds who decked

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by the Attorney-General in his speech at the trial of Harrison the regicide. ‘ Now they speak plainly, and call this blessed king, this glorious saint, the Grand Delinquent. Hæc acies victum factura nocentem est.’ ‘ State Trials,’ v. 1014.

<sup>2</sup> For the contempt here expressed for the Greek gymnastic schools, see also Tacitus, ‘ Annals,’ 14, 21. It is well known that Nero instituted games called Neronia which were borrowed from the Greeks ; and that many of the Roman citizens despised them as foreign and profligate. Merivale, chapter liii., cites this passage.

‘ Pompeius’ hundred pageants scarce were fit  
 ‘ For one poor triumph. Shall Armenia care 330  
 ‘ Who leads her masters, or barbarians shed  
 ‘ One drop of blood to make Pompeius chief  
 ‘ O’er our Italia? Rome, ’tis Rome they hate,  
 ‘ Their lord and master : yet they hate the most  
 ‘ Those whom they know. My fate is in the hands  
 ‘ Of you, mine own true soldiers, proved in all  
 ‘ The wars we fought in Gallia. When the sword  
 ‘ Of each of you shall strike, I know the hand :  
 ‘ The javelin’s flight to me betrays the arm  
 ‘ That launched it hurtling : and to-day once more 340  
 ‘ I see the faces stern, the threatening eyes,  
 ‘ Unfailing proofs of victory to come.  
 ‘ E’en now the battle rushes on my sight ;  
 ‘ Kings trodden down and scattered senators  
 ‘ Fill all th’ ensanguined plain, and peoples float  
 ‘ Unnumbered on the crimson tide of death.  
 ‘ Enough of words—I but delay the fates ;  
 ‘ And you who burn to dash into the fray,  
 ‘ Forgive the pause. I tremble with the hope<sup>1</sup>  
 ‘ Thus finding utterance. I ne’er have seen 350  
 ‘ The mighty gods so near ; this little field  
 ‘ Alone dividing us ; their hands are full  
 ‘ Of my predestined honours : for ’tis I  
 ‘ Who when this war is done shall have the power  
 ‘ O’er all that peoples, all that kings enjoy  
 ‘ To shower it where I will. But has the sky

<sup>1</sup> Thus paraphrased by Dean Stanley :

‘ I tremble not with terror, but with hope,  
 As the great day reveals its coming scope ;  
 Never in earlier days, our hearts to cheer,  
 Have such bright gifts of Heaven been brought so near,  
 Nor ever has been kept the aspiring soul  
 By space so narrow from so grand a goal.’

Inaugural address at St. Andrews, 1873, on the ‘ Study of Greatness.’

' Swerved from its course, has some high star of heaven  
 ' Turned backwards, that such mighty deeds should pass  
 ' Here on Thessalian earth? To-day we reap  
 ' Of all our wars the harvest or the doom. 360  
 ' Think of the cross that threatens us, and the chain,  
 ' Limbs hacked asunder, Cæsar's head displayed  
 ' Upon the rostra; and that narrow field  
 ' Piled up with slaughter: for this hostile chief  
 ' Is savage Sulla's pupil. 'Tis for you,  
 ' If conquered, that I grieve: my lot apart  
 ' Is cast long since. This sword, should one of you  
 ' Turn from the battle ere the foe be fled,  
 ' Shall rob the life of Cæsar. O ye gods,  
 ' Drawn down from heaven by the throes of Rome, 370  
 ' May he be conqueror who shall not draw  
 ' Against the vanquished an inhuman sword,  
 ' Nor count it as a crime if men of Rome  
 ' Preferred another's standard to his own.  
 ' Pompeius' sword drank deep Italian blood  
 ' When cabined in yon space the brave man's arm  
 ' No more found room to strike. But you, I pray,  
 ' Touch not the foe who turns him from the fight,  
 ' A fellow citizen, a foe no more.  
 ' But while the gleaming weapons threaten still, 380  
 ' Let no fond memories unnerve the arm,<sup>1</sup>  
 ' No pious thought of father or of kin;  
 ' But full in face of brother or of sire,  
 ' Drive home the blade: of victims e'en unknown  
 ' Your foes account the slaughter as a crime.  
 ' Spare not our camp, but lay the rampart low  
 ' And fill the fosse with ruin; not a man  
 ' But holds his post within the ranks to-day.  
 ' And yonder tents, deserted by the foe,  
 ' Shall give us shelter when the rout is done.' 390

<sup>1</sup> That such were Cæsar's orders is attested by Appian.

Scarce had he paused ; they snatch the hasty meal,  
And seize their armour and with swift acclaim  
Welcome the chief's predictions of the day,  
Tread low their camp when rushing to the fight ;  
And take their post : nor word nor order given,  
In fate they put their trust. Nor, hadst thou placed  
All Cæsars there, all striving for the throne  
Of Rome their city, had their serried ranks  
With speedier tread dashed down upon the foe.

But when Pompeius saw the hostile troops 400  
Move forth in order and demand the fight,  
And knew the gods' approval of the day,  
He stood astonied, while a deadly chill  
Struck to his heart—omen itself of woe,  
That such a chief should at the call to arms,  
Thus dread the issue : but with fear repressed,  
Borne on his noble steed along the line  
Of all his forces, thus he spake : ' The day  
' Your bravery demands, that final end  
' Of civil war ye asked for, is at hand. 410  
' Put forth your strength, your all ; the sword to-day  
' Does its last work. One crowded hour is charged  
' With nations' destinies. Whoe'er of you  
' Longs for his land and home, his wife and child,  
' Seek them with sword. Here in mid battle-field,  
' The gods place all at stake. Our better right  
' Bids us expect their favour ; they shall dip  
' Your brands in Cæsar's blood, and thus shall give  
' Another sanction to the laws of Rome,  
' Our cause of battle. If for him were meant 420  
' An empire o'er the world, had they not put  
' An end to Magnus' life ? That I am chief  
' Of all these mingled peoples and of Rome  
' Disproves an angry heaven. See here combined



‘ All means of victory. Noble men have sought  
‘ Unasked the risks of war. Our soldiers boast  
‘ Ancestral statues. If to us were given  
‘ A Curius, if Camillus were returned,  
‘ Or patriot Decius to devote his life,  
‘ Here would they take their stand. From furthest east 430  
‘ All nations gathered, cities as the sand  
‘ Unnumbered, give their aid : a world complete  
‘ Serves ’neath our standards. North and south and all  
‘ Who have their being ’neath the starry vault,  
‘ Here meet in arms conjoined : and shall we not  
‘ Crush with our closing wings this paltry foe ?  
‘ Few shall find room to strike ; the rest with voice  
‘ Must be content to aid : for Cæsar’s ranks  
‘ Suffice not for us. Think from Rome’s high walls  
‘ The matrons watch you with their hair unbound ; 440  
‘ Think that the Senate hoar, too old for arms,  
‘ With snowy locks outspread ; and Rome herself,  
‘ The world’s high mistress, fearing now, alas !  
‘ A despot—all exhort you to the fight.  
‘ Think that the people that is and that shall be  
‘ Joins in the prayer—in freedom to be born,  
‘ In freedom die, their wish. If ’mid these vows  
‘ Be still found place for mine, with wife and child,  
‘ So far as Imperator may, I bend  
‘ Before you suppliant—unless this fight 450  
‘ Be won, behold me exile, your disgrace,  
‘ My kinsman’s scorn. From this, ’tis yours to save.  
‘ Then save ! Nor in the latest stage of life,  
‘ Let Magnus be a slave.’

Then burned their souls

At these his words, indignant at the thought,  
And Rome rose up within them, and to die  
Was welcome.



Thus alike with hearts aflame  
Moved either host to battle, one in fear  
And one in hope of empire. These hands shall do  
Such work as not the rolling centuries, 460  
Not all mankind, though free from sword and war,  
Shall e'er make good. Nations that were to live  
This fight shall crush, and peoples pre-ordained  
To make the history of the coming world  
Shall come not to the birth. The Latin names  
Shall sound as fables in the ears of men,  
And ruins loaded with the dust of years  
Shall hardly mark her cities. Alba's hill,  
Home of our gods, no human foot shall tread,  
Save of some Senator at the nightly feast 470  
By Numa's orders founded—he compelled  
Serves his high office.<sup>1</sup> Void and desolate  
Are Veii, Cora and Laurentum's hold ;  
Yet not the tooth of envious time destroyed  
These storied monuments—'twas civil war  
That rased their citadels. Where now has fled  
The teeming life that once Italia knew ?  
Not all the earth can furnish her with men :  
Untenanted her dwellings and her fields :  
Slaves till her soil : one city holds us all : 480  
Crumbling to ruin, the ancestral roof  
Finds none on whom to fall ; and Rome herself,  
Void of her citizens, draws within her gates  
The dregs of all the world. That none might wage  
A civil war again, thus deeply drank  
Pharsalia's fight the life-blood of her sons.  
Dark in the calendar of Rome for aye,  
The days when Allia and Cannæ fell :

<sup>1</sup> See Book V., 465.

And shall Pharsalus' morn, darkest of all,  
Stand on the page unmarked? Alas, the fates! 490  
Not plague nor pestilence nor famine's rage,  
Not cities given to the flames, nor towns  
Trembling at shock of earthquake shall weigh down  
Such heroes lost, when Fortune's ruthless hand  
Lops at one blow the gift of centuries,  
Leaders and men embattled. How great art thou,  
Rome, in thy fall! Stretched to the widest bounds  
War upon war laid nations at thy feet  
Till flaming Titan nigh to either pole  
Beheld thine empire; and the furthest east 500  
Was almost thine, till day and night and sky  
For thee revolved, and all the stars could see  
Throughout their course was Roman. But the fates  
In one dread day of slaughter and despair  
Turned back the centuries and spoke thy doom.  
And now the Indian fears the axe no more  
Once emblem of thy power, now no more  
The girded Consul curbs the Getan horde,  
Or in Sarmatian furrows guides the share:<sup>1</sup>  
Still Parthia boasts her triumphs unavenged: 510  
Foul is the public life; and Freedom, fled  
To furthest Earth beyond the Tigris stream,  
And Rhine's broad river, wandering at her will  
'Mid Teuton hordes and Scythian, though by sword  
Sought, yet returns not. Would that from the day  
When Romulus, aided by the vulture's flight,  
Ill-omened, raised within that hateful grove  
Rome's earliest walls, down to the crimsoned field  
In dire Thessalia fought, she ne'er had known

<sup>1</sup> That is, marked out the new colony with a plough-share. This was regarded as a religious ceremony, and therefore performed by the Consul with his toga worn in ancient fashion.

Italia's peoples ! Did the Bruti strike 520  
 In vain for liberty ? Why laws and rights  
 Sanctioned by all the annals designate  
 With consular titles ? Happier far the Medes  
 And blest Arabia, and the Eastern lands  
 Held by a kindlier fate in despot rule !  
 That nation serves the worst which serves with shame.  
 No guardian gods watch over us from heaven :  
 Jove<sup>1</sup> is no king ; let ages whirl along  
 In blind confusion : from his throne supreme  
 Shall he behold such carnage and restrain 530  
 His thunderbolts ? On Mimas shall he hurl  
 His fires, on Rhodope and Cæta's woods  
 Unmeriting such chastisement, and leave  
 This life to Cassius' hand ? On Argos fell  
 At grim Thyestes' feast<sup>2</sup> untimely night  
 By him thus hastened ; shall Thessalia's land  
 Receive full daylight, wielding kindred swords  
 In fathers' hands and brothers' ? Careless of men  
 Are all the gods. Yet for this day of doom  
 Such vengeance have we reaped as deities 540  
 May give to mortals ; for these wars shall raise  
 Our parted Cæsars to the gods ; and Rome  
 Shall deck their effigies with thunderbolts,  
 And stars and rays, and in the very fanes  
 Swear by the shades of men.

With swift advance

They seize the space that yet delays the fates  
 Till short the span dividing. Then they gaze  
 For one short moment where may fall the spear,  
 What hand may deal their death, what monstrous task  
 Soon shall be theirs ; and all in arms they see, 550

<sup>1</sup> 'Hath Jove no thunder ?'— Ben Jonson, 'Catiline,' iii., 2.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Book I., line 603.

In reach of stroke, their brothers and their sires  
 With front opposing ; yet to yield their ground  
 It pleased them not. But all the host was dumb  
 With horror ; cold upon each loving heart,  
 Awe-struck, the life-blood pressed ; and all men held  
 With arms outstretched their javelins for a time,  
 Poised yet unthrown. Now may th' avenging gods  
 Allot thee, Crastinus,<sup>1</sup> not such a death  
 As all men else do suffer ! In the tomb  
 May'st thou have feeling and remembrance still ! 560  
 For thine the hand that first flung forth the dart,  
 Which stained with Roman blood Thessalia's earth.  
 Madman ! To speed thy lance when Cæsar's self  
 Still held his hand ! Then from the clarions broke  
 The strident summons, and the trumpets blared  
 Responsive signal. Upward to the vault  
 The sound re-echoes where nor clouds may reach  
 Nor thunder penetrate ; and Hæmus' slopes<sup>2</sup>  
 Reverberate to Pelion the din ;  
 Pindus re-echoes ; Æta's lofty rocks 570  
 Groan, and Pangæan cliffs, till at their rage  
 Borne back from all the earth they shook for fear.

Unnumbered darts they hurl, with prayers diverse ;  
 Some hope to wound : others, in secret, yearn  
 For hands still innocent. Chance rules supreme,  
 And wayward Fortune upon whom she wills  
 Makes fall the guilt. Yet, for the hatred bred  
 By civil war suffices spear nor lance,

<sup>1</sup> This act of Crastinus is recorded by Plutarch ('Pompeius,' 71), and by Cæsar, 'De Bello Celtico,' Book III., 91.

Cæsar called him by name and said : 'Well, Crastinus, shall we win to-day ?' 'We shall win with glory, Cæsar,' he replied in a loud voice, 'and to-day you will praise me, living or dead.'—Drury, 'History of Rome,' vol. iii., 312.

He was placed in a special tomb after the battle.

<sup>2</sup> See on line 203.

Urged on their flight afar : the hand must grip  
The sword and drive it to the foeman's heart. 580  
But while Pompeius' ranks, shield wedged to shield,  
Were ranged in dense array, and scarce had space  
To draw the blade, came rushing at the charge  
Full on the central column Cæsar's host,  
Mad for the battle. Man nor arms could stay  
The crash of onset, and the furious sword  
Clove through the stubborn panoply to the flesh,  
There only stayed. One army struck—their foes  
Struck not in answer ; Magnus' swords were cold,  
But Cæsar's reeked with slaughter and with guilt. 590  
Nor Fortune lingered, but decreed the doom  
Which swept the ruins of a world away.

Soon as withdrawn from all the spacious plain,  
Pompeius' horse was ranged upon the flanks ;  
Passed through the outer files, the lighter armed  
Of all the nations joined the central strife,  
With divers weapons armed, but all for blood  
Of Rome athirst : then blazing torches flew,  
Arrows and stones, and ponderous balls of lead  
Molten by speed of passage through the air. 600  
There Ituræan archers and the Mede  
Winged forth their shafts unaimed, till all the sky  
Grew dark with missiles hurled ; and from the night  
Brooding above, Death struck his victims down.  
Guiltless such blow, while all the crime was heaped  
Upon the Roman spear. In line oblique  
Behind the standards Cæsar in reserve  
Had placed some companies of foot, in fear  
The foremost ranks might waver. These at his word,  
No trumpet sounding, break upon the ranks 610  
Of Magnus' horsemen where they rode at large  
Flanking the battle. They, unshamed of fear



And careless of the fray, when first a steed  
Pierced through by javelin spurned with sounding hoof  
The temples of his rider, turned the rein,  
And through their comrades spurring from the field  
In panic, proved that not with warring Rome  
Barbarians may grapple. Then arose  
Immeasurable carnage : here the sword,  
There stood the victim, and the victor's arm 620  
Wearied of slaughter. Oh, that to thy plains,  
Pharsalia, might suffice the crimson stream  
From hosts barbarian, nor other blood  
Pollute thy fountains' sources ! these alone  
Shall clothe thy pastures with the bones of men !  
Or if thy fields must run with Roman blood  
Then spare the nations who in times to come  
Must be her peoples !

Now the terror spread  
Through all the army, and the favouring fates  
Decreed for Cæsar's triumph : and the war 630  
Ceased in the wider plain, though still ablaze  
Where stood the chosen of Pompeius' force,  
Upholding yet the fight. Not here allies  
Begged from some distant king to wield the sword :  
Here were the Roman sons, the sires of Rome,  
Here the last frenzy and the last despair :  
Here, Cæsar, was thy crime : and here shall stay  
My Muse repelled : no poesy of mine  
Shall tell the horrors of the final strife,  
Nor for the coming ages paint the deeds 640  
Which civil war permits. Be all obscured  
In deepest darkness ! Spare the useless tear  
And vain lament, and let the deeds that fell  
In that last fight of Rome remain unsung.

But Cæsar adding fury to the breasts



Already flaming with the rage of war,  
That each might bear his portion of the guilt  
Which stained the host, unflinching through the ranks  
Passed at his will. He looked upon the brands,  
These reddened only at the point, and those 650  
Streaming with blood and gory to the hilt :  
He marks the hand which trembling grasped the sword,  
Or held it idle, and the cheek that grew  
Pale at the blow, and that which at his words  
Glowed with the joy of battle : midst the dead  
He treads the plain and on each gaping wound  
Presses his hand to keep the life within.  
'Thus Cæsar passed : and where his footsteps fell  
As when Bellona shakes her crimson lash,  
Or Mavors scourges on the Thracian mares <sup>1</sup> 660  
When shunning the dread face on Pallas' shield,  
He drives his chariot, there arose a night  
Dark with huge slaughter and with crime, and groans  
As of a voice immense, and sound of arms  
As fell the wearer, and of sword on sword  
Crashed into fragments. With a ready hand  
Cæsar supplies the weapon and bids strike  
Full at the visage ; and with lance reversed  
Urges the flagging ranks and stirs the fight.  
Where flows the nation's blood, where beats the heart, 670  
Knowing, he bids them spare the common herd,  
But seeks the senators—thus Rome he strikes,  
Thus the last hold of Freedom. In the fray,  
Then fell the nobles with their mighty names  
Of ancient prowess ; there Metellus' sons,  
Corvini, Lepidi, Torquati too,  
Not once nor twice the conquerors of kings,

<sup>1</sup> That is, lashes on his team terrified by the Gorgon shield in the ranks of the enemy.

First of all men, Pompeius' name except,  
Lay dead upon the field.

But, Brutus, where,  
Where was thy sword ?<sup>1</sup> Veiled by a common helm 680  
Unknown thou wanderest. Thy country's pride,  
Hope of the Senate, thou (for none besides) ;  
Thou latest scion of that race of pride,  
Whose fearless deeds the centuries record,  
Tempt not the battle, nor provoke the doom !  
Awaits thee on Philippi's fated field  
Thy Thessaly. Not here shalt thou prevail  
'Gainst Cæsar's life. Not yet hath he surpassed  
The height of power and deserved a death  
Noble at Brutus' hands—then let him live, 690  
Thy fated victim !

There upon the field  
Lay all the honour of Rome ; no common stream  
Mixed with the purple tide. And yet of all  
Who noble fell, one only now I sing,  
Thee, brave Domitius.<sup>2</sup> Whene'er the day  
Was adverse to the fortunes of thy chief  
Thine was the arm which vainly stayed the fight.  
Vanquished so oft by Cæsar, now 'twas thine  
Yet free to perish. By a thousand wounds  
Came welcome death, nor had thy conqueror power 700

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch states that Brutus after the battle escaped and made his way to Larissa, whence he wrote to Cæsar. Cæsar, pleased that he was alive, asked him to come to him ; and it was on Brutus' opinion that Cæsar determined to hurry to Egypt as the most probable refuge of Pompeius. Cæsar entrusted Brutus with the command of Cisalpine Gaul when he was in Africa.

<sup>2</sup> 'He perished, after a career of furious partisanship, disgraced with cruelty and treachery, on the field of Pharsalia' (Merivale, 'Hist. Romans under the Empire,' chapter lii.). Unless this man had been an ancestor of Nero it is impossible to suppose that Lucan would have thus singled him out. But he appears to have been the only leader who fell. (Compare Book II., lines 534-590, for his conduct at Corfinium.)

Again to pardon. Cæsar stood and saw  
The dark blood welling forth and death at hand,  
And thus in words of scorn : ‘ And dost thou lie,  
‘ Domitius, there ? And did Pompeius name  
‘ Thee his successor, thee ? Why leavest thou then  
‘ His standards helpless ? ’ But the parting life  
Still faintly throbbed within Domitius’ breast,  
Thus finding utterance : ‘ Yet thou hast not won  
‘ Thy hateful prize, for doubtful are the fates ;  
‘ Nor thou the master, Cæsar ; free as yet, 710  
‘ With great Pompeius for my leader still,  
‘ Warring no more, I seek the silent shades,  
‘ Yet with this hope in death, that thou subdued  
‘ To Magnus and to me in grievous guise  
‘ Mayst pay atonement.’ So he spake : no more ;  
Then closed his eyes in death.

’Twere shame to shed,  
When thus a world was perishing, the tear  
Meet for each fate, or sing the wound that reft  
Each life away. One spurned upon the soil  
His vitals as they trailed ; one faced the foe 720  
And as the sword struck deep into his throat  
Breathed forth his life : another fell to earth  
Prone at the stroke ; one stood though shorn of limb ;  
Glanced from this breast unharmed the quivering spear ;  
That it transfixed to earth. Here from the veins  
Spouted the life-blood, till the foeman’s arms  
Were crimsoned. One his brother slew, nor dared  
To spoil the corse, till severed from the neck  
He flung the head afar. Another dashed  
Full in his father’s teeth the fatal sword, 730  
By murderous frenzy striving to disprove  
His kinship with the slain. Yet for each death  
We find no separate dirge, nor weep for men

When peoples fell. Thus, Rome, thy doom was wrought  
At dread Pharsalus. Not, as in other fields,  
By soldiers slain, or captains ; here were swept  
Whole nations to the death ; Assyria here,  
Achaia, Pontus ; and the blood of Rome  
Gushing in torrents forth, forbade the rest  
To stagnate on the plain. Nor life was reft, 740  
Nor safety only then ; but reeled the world  
And all her manifold peoples at the blow  
In that day's battle dealt ; nor only then  
Felt, but in all the times that were to come.  
Those swords gave servitude to every age  
That shall be slavish ; by our sires was shaped  
For us our destiny, the despot yoke.  
Yet have we trembled not, nor feared to bare  
Our throats to slaughter, nor to face the foe :  
We bear the penalty for others' shame, 750  
Such be our doom ; yet, Fortune, sharing not  
In that last battle, 'twas our right to strike  
One blow for freedom ere we served our lord.

Now saw Pompeius, grieving, that the gods  
Had left his side, and knew the fates of Rome  
Passed from his governance ; yet all the blood  
That filled the field scarce brought him to confess  
His fortunes fled. A little hill he sought  
Whence to descry the battle raging still  
Upon the plain, which when he nearer stood 760  
The warring ranks concealed. Thence did the chief  
Gaze on unnumbered swords that flashed in air  
And sought his ruin ; and the tide of blood  
In which his host had perished. Yet not as those  
Who, prostrate fallen, would drag nations down  
To share their evil fate, Pompeius did.  
Still were the gods thought worthy of his prayers

To give him solace, in that after him  
 Might live his Romans. 'Spare, ye gods,' he said,  
 'Nor lay whole peoples low; my fall attained, 770  
 'The world and Rome may stand. And if ye need  
 'More bloodshed, here on me, my wife, and sons  
 'Wreak out your vengeance—pledges to the fates  
 'Such have we given. Too little for the war  
 'Is our destruction? Doth the carnage fail,  
 'The world escaping? Magnus' fortunes lost,  
 'Why doom all else beside him?' Thus he cried,  
 And passed amid his standards, and recalled  
 His vanquished host that rushed on fate declared.  
 Not for his sake such carnage should be wrought. 780  
 So thought Pompeius; nor the foeman's sword  
 He feared, nor death; but lest upon his fall  
 To quit their chief his soldiers might refuse,  
 And o'er his prostrate corpse a world in arms  
 Might find its ruin: or perchance he wished  
 From Cæsar's eager eyes to veil his death.  
 In vain, unhappy! for the fates decree  
 He shall behold, shorn from the bleeding trunk,  
 Again thy visage. And thou, too, his spouse,  
 Beloved Cornelia, didst cause his flight; 790  
 Thy longed-for features; yet he shall not die  
 When thou art present.<sup>1</sup>

Then upon his steed,  
 Though fearing not the weapons at his back,  
 Pompeius fled, his mighty soul prepared  
 To meet his final doom. He saw thy field,  
 Pharsalia, tearless and without a groan;  
 For solemn grief and majesty of mien

<sup>1</sup> This appears to be the only possible meaning of the text. But in truth, although Cornelia was not by her husband's side at his murder, she was present at the scene.



Were in his face, as for the woes of Rome.  
No pride in him the day of victory found,  
Nor rout shall find despair ; alike in days 800  
When fickle Fortune triple triumph gave  
And when she fled, her lord.

The burden laid

Of thine impending fate, thou partest free  
To muse upon the happy days of yore.  
Hope now has fled ; but in the fleeting past  
How wast thou great ! Seek thou the wars no more,  
And call the gods to witness that for thee  
Henceforth no man shall die. The fights to come  
On Afric's mournful shore, by Pharos' stream  
And fateful Munda, and the final scene 810  
Of dire Pharsalia's battle are not thine.  
Thy name no more shall stir the world to war,  
But those great rivals bidding with us yet,  
Cæsar and Liberty ; and not for thee  
When thou hadst fled the field, but for itself  
The dying Senate still upheld the fight.  
Find'st thou not solace thus to quit the field  
Nor witness all the horrors of its close ?  
Look back upon the crimsoned ranks of war,  
The rivers turbid with ensanguined stream ; 820  
Then pity thou thy kinsman. How shall he  
Enter the city, who on such a field  
Finds happiness ? Whate'er in lands unknown  
Thine exiled lot, whate'er the Pharian king  
May place upon thee, trust thou in the gods ;  
Trust the long story of the favouring fates :  
'Twere worse to conquer. Then forbid the tear,  
The nation's grief, the weeping of mankind,  
And let the world adore thee in defeat  
As in thy triumphs. With unaltered gaze 830



Look down upon the kings, thy subjects still ;  
 Look on the realms and cities which they hold,  
 Egypt and Libya, gifts from thee of yore ;  
 And choose the country that befits thy death.

Larissa first was witness of thy fall,  
 Thy noble mien, as victor of the fates ;  
 And loud in sorrow, yet with gifts of price  
 Fit for a conqueror flung back her gates  
 And poured her citizens forth. ‘Our homes and fanes  
 ‘To thee are open ; would it were our lot 840  
 ‘With thee to perish ; of thy mighty name  
 ‘Still much survives and conquered by thyself,  
 ‘Thyself alone, still couldst thou to the war  
 ‘All nations call and challenge fate again.’

But thus he spake : ‘To cities nor to men  
 ‘Avails the conquered aught : then pledge your faith  
 ‘To him who has the victory.’ Cæsar still  
 Trod deep in piles of slaughter on the field,  
 His country’s vitals, while his daughter’s spouse  
 Thus gave him kingdoms. But Pompeius fled 850  
 ‘Mid sobs and groans and blaming of the gods  
 For this their fierce commandment ; and he fled  
 Full of the fruits and knowledge of the love  
 The peoples bore him, which he knew not his  
 In times of happiness.

When Italian blood

Flowed deep enough upon the fatal field,  
 Cæsar gave mercy to the meaner crowd  
 Whose deaths were vain. But that the hostile camp  
 Might not recall the foe, nor calm of night  
 Banish their fears, he bids his cohorts dash, 860  
 While Fortune glowed and terror filled the plain,  
 Straight on the ramparts of the conquered foe.  
 Light was the task to urge them to the spoil

Though worn by battle, wearied with the fray :  
' Soldiers,' he said, ' the victory is ours,  
' Full and triumphant : there doth lie the prize  
' Which you have won, not Cæsar ; at your feet  
' Behold the booty of the hostile camp.  
' Snatched from Hesperian nations ruddy gold,  
' And all the riches of the Orient world, 870  
' Are piled within the tents. The wealth of kings  
' And of Pompeius here awaits its lords.  
' Haste, soldiers, and outstrip the flying foe ;  
' E'en now the vanquished of Pharsalia's field  
' Anticipate your spoils.' No more he said,  
But drave them, blind with frenzy for the gold,  
To spurn the bodies of their fallen sires,  
And trample chiefs in dashing on their prey.  
What rampart had restrained them as they rushed  
To seize the prize for wickedness and war 880  
And learn the price of guilt ? And though they found  
In ponderous masses heaped for need of war  
The trophies of a world, yet were their minds  
Unsatisfied, that asked for all. Whate'er  
Iberian mines or Tagus bring to day,  
Or Arimaspians from golden sands  
May gather, had they seized ; still they had thought  
Their guilt too cheaply sold. When pledged to them  
Was the Tarpeian rock, for victory won,  
And all the spoils of Rome, by Cæsar's word, 890  
Shall camps suffice them ? Then plebeian limbs  
On senators' turf took rest, on kingly couch  
The soldier wretch ; and there the murderer lay  
Where yesternight his brother or his sire.  
In maddened dreams the fury of the fight  
Still raged, and in their sleep the guilty hand  
Still wrought its deeds of blood, and restless gripped

The phantom sword-hilt. Thou hadst said that groans  
 Issued from all the plain, that parted souls  
 Had breathed a life into the guilty soil, 900  
 That earthly darkness teemed with gibbering ghosts  
 And Stygian terrors. Victory foully won  
 Thus claimed its punishment. The slumbering sense  
 Already heard the hiss of vengeful flames :  
 There troop the ghostly slain : a slaughtered sire  
 Tortures the breast of one ; a brother's shape  
 There haunts his murderer's couch : each sees the form  
 Of him whose life he took. But all the dead  
 In Cæsar's dreams were visioned. In such guise  
 Orestes saw the Furies, ere he fled 910  
 To purge his sin within the Scythian bounds ;  
 Such fierce convulsions raged within the soul  
 Of Pentheus mad ; and in Agavé's<sup>1</sup> mind  
 When she had known her son. Before his gaze  
 Flashed all the javelins which Pharsalia saw,  
 Or that avenging day when drew their blades  
 The Roman senators ; and monstrous shapes  
 Scourged all his frame. 'Tis thus the wretch shall find  
 In guilty conscience punishment most dire :  
 He saw the Styx before his rival died : 920  
 And goblin horrors from the depths of Hell  
 Thronged on his sleep.

Yet when the radiant sun  
 Unveiled the butchery of Pharsalia's field<sup>2</sup>  
 He shrank not from its horror, nor withdrew

<sup>1</sup> Book VI., 420.

<sup>2</sup> The whole of this passage is foreign to Cæsar's character, and unfounded in fact. 15,000 Pompeians perished on the field, and 24,000 were taken prisoners. When Cæsar passed over the field he is recorded to have said in pity, 'They would have it so ; after all my exploits I should have been condemned to death had I not thrown myself upon the protection of my soldiers.'—Plutarch, 'Cæsar,' 46 ; Durny, 'History of Rome,' vol. iii., p. 311.

His feasting gaze. There rolled the streams in flood  
With crimson carnage ; there a seething heap  
Rose shrouding all the plain, now in decay  
Slow settling down ; there numbered he the host  
Of Magnus slain ; and for the morn's repast  
That spot he chose whence he might watch the dead, 930  
And feast his eyes upon Emathia's field  
Concealed by corpses ; of the bloody sight  
Insatiate, he forbad the funeral pyre,  
And cast Emathia in the face of heaven.  
Nor by the Punic victor was he taught,  
Who at the close of Cannæ's fatal fight  
Laid in the earth the Roman consul dead,  
To find fit burial for his fallen foes ;  
For these were all his countrymen, nor yet  
His ire by blood appeased. Yet ask we not 940  
For separate pyres or sepulchres apart  
Wherein to lay the ashes of the fallen :  
Burn in one holocaust the nations slain ;  
Or should it please thy soul to torture more  
Thy kinsman, pile on high from Œta's slopes  
And Pindus' top the woods : thus shall he see  
While fugitive on the deep the blaze that marks  
Thessalian bounds. Yet by this idle rage  
Nought dost thou profit ; for these corporal frames  
Bearing innate from birth the certain germs 950  
Of dissolution, whether by decay  
Or fire consumed, shall fall into the lap  
Of all-embracing nature. Thus if now  
Thou shouldst deny the pyre, still in that flame  
When all shall crumble,<sup>1</sup> earth and rolling seas  
And stars commingled with the bones of men,

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the general conflagration in which (by the Stoic doctrines) all the universe would one day perish. Comp. Browne, 'Religio Medici,' part i., section xlv.

These too shall perish. Where thy soul shall go  
 These shall companion thee ; no higher flight  
 In airy realms is thine, nor smoother couch  
 Beneath the Stygian darkness ; for the dead 960  
 No fortune favours, and our Mother Earth  
 All that is born from her receives again,  
 And he whose bones no tomb or urn protects<sup>1</sup>  
 Yet sleeps beneath the canopy of heaven.  
 And thou, proud conqueror, who wouldst deny  
 The rites of burial to thousands slain,  
 Why flee thy field of triumph ? Why desert  
 This reeking plain ? Drink, Cæsar, if thou canst  
 Of these ensanguined streams, and breathe the air  
 Of cursed Thessalia : but from thy grasp 970  
 The earth is ravished, and th' unburied host,  
 Routing their victor, hold Pharsalia's field.

Then to the ghastly harvest of the war  
 Came all the beasts of earth whose facile sense  
 Of odour tracks the bodies of the slain.  
 Sped from his northern home the Thracian wolf ;  
 Bears left their dens and lions from afar  
 Scenting the carnage ; dogs obscene and foul  
 Their homes deserted : all the air was full  
 Of gathering fowl, who in their flight had long 980  
 Pursued the armies. Cranes<sup>2</sup> who yearly change  
 The frosts of Thracia for the banks of Nile,  
 This year delayed their voyage. As ne'er before  
 The air grew dark with vultures' hovering wings,  
 Innumerable, for every grove and wood  
 Sent forth its denizens ; on every tree  
 Dripped from their crimsoned beaks a gory dew.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in More's 'Utopia,' Book I., p. 28 (Lupton's edition), and in Browne, 'Religio Medici,' part i., section xl. 'Nor do I altogether allow that Rodomontado of Lucan, *cælo tegitur qui non habet urnam.*'

<sup>2</sup> Wrongly supposed by Lucan to feed on carrion.



Oft on the conquerors and their impious arms  
Or purple rain of blood, or mouldering flesh  
Fell from the lofty heaven ; or limbs of men 990  
From weary talons dropped. Yet even so  
The peoples passed not all into the maw  
Of ravening beast or fowl ; the inmost flesh  
Scarce did they touch, nor limbs—thus lay the dead  
Scorned by the spoiler ; and the Roman host  
By sun and length of days, and rain from heaven,  
At length was mingled with Emathia's plain.

Ill-starred Thessalia ! By what hateful crime  
Didst thou offend that thus on thee alone  
Was laid such carnage ? By what length of years 1000  
Shalt thou be cleansèd from the curse of war ?  
When shall the harvest of thy fields arise  
Free from their purple stain ? And when the share  
Cease to upturn the slaughtered hosts of Rome ?  
First shall the battle onset sound again,  
Again shall flow upon thy fated earth  
A crimson torrent. Thus may be o'erthrown  
Our sires' memorials ; those erected last,  
Or those which pierced by ancient roots have spread  
Through broken stones their sacred urns abroad. 1010  
Thus shall the ploughman of Hæmonia gaze  
On more abundant ashes, and the rake  
Pass o'er more frequent bones. Wert, Thracia, thou,  
Our only battlefield, no sailor's hand  
Upon thy shore should make his cable fast ;  
No spade should turn, the husbandman should flee  
Thy fields, the resting-place of Roman dead ;  
No lowing kine should graze, nor shepherd dare  
To leave his fleecy charge to browse at will  
On fields made fertile by our mouldering dust ; 1020  
All bare and unexplored thy soil should lie,



As past man's footsteps, parched by cruel suns,  
Or palled by snows unmelting ! But, ye gods,  
Give us to hate the lands which bear the guilt ;  
Let not all earth be cursèd, though not all  
Be blameless found.

'Twas thus that Munda's fight  
And blood of Mutina, and Leucas' cape,  
And sad Pachynus,<sup>1</sup> made Philippi pure.

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the naval war waged by Sextus Pompeius after Cæsar's death. He took possession of Sicily, and had command of the seas, but was ultimately defeated by the fleet of Octavius under Agrippa in B.C. 36. Pachynus was the S.E. promontory of the island, but is used in the sense of Sicily, for this battle took place on the north coast.

BOOK VIII  
DEATH OF POMPEIUS

Pompeius flies to Lesbos, lines 1-74, and consoles his wife, 75-97. Her reply, 98-124. He declines shelter at Lesbos, 125-168. He sails to Asia Minor and sends Deiotarus to rouse the East, 168-300. He addresses his captains at Phaselis, 301-372. Reply of Lentulus, 374-515. Pompeius proceeds to Egypt, 517-535. The council of Ptolemæus and speech of Pothinus, 536-621. Apostrophe to Egypt, 622-652. The murder of Pompeius and laments of Cornelia, 653-770. The head of Pompeius is cut off and embalmed, 771-805. Apostrophe to Ptolemæus, 806-829. Cordus buries the body, 830-963. Apostrophe to Egypt, 964-1025.

## BOOK VIII

### *DEATH OF POMPEIUS*

Now through Alcides' <sup>1</sup> pass and Tempe's groves  
Pompeius, aiming for Hæmonian glens  
And forests lone, urged on his wearied steed  
Scarce heeding now the spur ; by devious tracks  
Seeking to veil the footsteps of his flight :  
The rustle of the foliage, and the noise  
Of following comrades filled his anxious soul  
With terrors, as he fancied at his side  
Some ambushed enemy. Fallen from the height  
Of former fortunes, still the chieftain knew 10  
His life not worthless ; mindful of the fates :  
And 'gainst the price he set on Cæsar's head,  
He measures Cæsar's value of his own.

Yet, as he rode, the features of the chief  
Made known his ruin. Many as they sought  
The camp Pharsalian, ere yet was spread  
News of the battle, met the chief, amazed,  
And wondered at the whirl of human things :  
Nor held disaster sure, though Magnus' self  
Told of his ruin. Every witness seen 20  
Brought peril on his flight : 'twere better far  
Safe in a name obscure, through all the world  
To wander ; but his ancient fame forbad.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Book VI., line 406.

Too long had great Pompeius from the height  
Of human glory, envied of mankind,  
Looked on all others ; nor for him henceforth  
Could life be lowly. The honours of his youth  
Too early thrust upon him, and the deeds  
Which brought him triumph in the Sullan days,  
His conquering navy and the Pontic war, 30  
Made heavier now the burden of defeat,  
And crushed his pondering soul. So length of days  
Drags down the haughty spirit, and life prolonged  
When power has fled. Unless when honour fails  
Comes end of life, and timely death forestalls  
Ensuing woe, the glory of past years  
Is present shame. Who'd venture on the sea  
Of favouring fortune but for death at need ?

Hard by Penëus' flood he reached the main  
Now with Pharsalus' slaughter blushing red : 40  
And borne in sloop, to shallows of a stream  
Scarce equal, dared the deep : Liburnia's lord,  
Lord of Cilicia, at whose countless oars  
Yet Leucas' inlets and Corcyra shook,  
Crept to the shelter of a tiny bark.  
For thou didst beckon him to Lesbos' shores,  
Thou, partner of the sorrows of thy lord,  
Cornelia ! Sadder far thy life apart  
Than wert thou present in Thessalia's fields.  
Racked is thy heart with presages of ill ; 50  
Pharsalia fills thy dreams ; and when the shades  
Give place to dawn, with hasty step thou tread'st  
Some cliff sea-beaten, and with gaze intent  
To mark the sail of each approaching ship  
Art first : yet dar'st not ask thy husband's fate.

Lo ! the ship comes, her load of ills unknown,  
Thy worst of fears some messenger of woe,

Some evil tidings of the battle day :  
Nay ! it is he, thy husband in defeat :  
Fear then no more, but weep ; nor waste the hour. 60  
He leaps to land ; she marks the cruel doom  
Wrought by the gods upon him : pale and wan  
His weary features, by the hoary locks  
Shaded ; the dust of travel on his garb.  
Dark on her soul a night of anguish fell ;  
Her trembling limbs no longer bore her frame :  
Scarce throbbed her heart, and prone on earth she lay  
Deceived in hope of death. The boat made fast,  
Pompeius treading the lone waste of sand  
Drew near ; whom when Cornelia's maidens saw, 70  
They stayed their weeping, yet with sighs subdued,  
Reproached the fates ; and tried in vain to raise  
Their mistress' form, till Magnus to his breast  
Drew her with cherishing arms ; and at the touch  
Of soothing hands the life-blood to her veins  
Returned once more, and she could bear to look  
Upon his features. He forbid despair,  
Chiding her grief. 'Not at the earliest blow  
' By Fortune dealt, inheritress of fame  
' Bequeathed by noble fathers, should thy strength 80  
' Thus fail and yield : renown shall yet be thine,  
' To last through ages ; not of laws decreed  
' Nor conquests won ; a gentler path to thee  
' As to thy sex, is given ; thy husband's woe.  
' Let thine affection struggle with the fates,  
' And in his misery love thy lord the more.  
' I bring thee greater glory, for that gone  
' Is all the pomp of lictors, gone the crowd  
' Of faithful senators, and the band of kings ;  
' Now first Pompeius for himself alone 90  
' 'Tis thine to love. Curb this unbounded grief,



' While yet I breathe, unseemly. O'er my tomb  
 ' Weep out thy full, the final pledge of faith.  
 ' Thou hast no loss, nor has the war destroyed  
 ' Aught save my fortune. If for that thy grief,  
 ' That was thy love.'

Roused by her husband's words,

Yet scarcely could she raise her trembling limbs,  
 Thus speaking through her sobs : ' Would I had sought  
 ' Detested Cæsar's couch, ill-omened wife  
 ' Of spouse unhappy ; at my nuptials twice 100  
 ' A Fury has been bridesmaid ; and the ghosts  
 ' Of slaughtered Crassi, with avenging shades  
 ' Brought by my wedlock to thy doomed camp  
 ' A Parthian massacre. Twice my star has cursed  
 ' The world, and peoples have been hurled to death  
 ' In one red moment ; and the gods through me  
 ' Have left the better cause. O, hero mine,  
 ' O mightiest husband, wedded to a wife  
 ' Unworthy ! 'Twas through her that Fortune gained  
 ' The right to strike thee. Wherefore did I wed 110  
 ' To bring thee misery ? Mine, mine the guilt,  
 ' Mine be the penalty. And that the wave  
 ' May bear thee gently onwards, and the kings  
 ' May keep their faith to thee, and all the earth  
 ' Be ready to thy rule, me from thy side  
 ' Cast to the billows. Rather had I died  
 ' To bring thee victory ; thy disasters thus,  
 ' Thus expiate. And, cruel Julia, thee,  
 ' Who by this war hast vengeance on our vows,  
 ' From thine abode I call : atonement find 120  
 ' In this thy rival's death, and spare at least  
 ' Thy Magnus.' Then upon his breast she fell,  
 While all the concourse wept—e'en Magnus' self,  
 Who saw Thessalia's field without a tear.

But now upon the shore a numerous band  
From Mitylene thus approached the chief :  
‘ If ’tis our greatest glory to have kept  
‘ The pledge with us by such a husband placed,  
‘ Do thou one night within these friendly walls  
‘ We pray thee, stay ; thus honouring the homes      130  
‘ Long since devoted, Magnus, to thy cause.  
‘ This spot in days to come the guest from Rome  
‘ For thee shall honour. Nowhere shalt thou find  
‘ A surer refuge in defeat. All else  
‘ May court the victor’s favour ; we long since  
‘ Have earned his chastisement. And though our isle  
‘ Rides on the deep, girt by the ocean wave,  
‘ No ships has Cæsar : and to us shall come,  
‘ Be sure, thy captains, to our trusted shore,  
‘ The war renewing. Take, for all is thine,      140  
‘ The treasures of our temples and the gold,  
‘ Take all our youth by land or on the sea  
‘ To do thy bidding : Lesbos only asks  
‘ This from the chief who sought her in his pride,  
‘ Not in his fall to leave her.’ Pleased in soul  
At such a love, and joyed that in the world  
Some faith still lingered, thus Pompeius said :  
‘ Earth has for me no dearer land than this.  
‘ Did I not trust it with so sweet a pledge  
‘ And find it faithful ? Here was Rome for me,      150  
‘ Country and household gods. This shore I sought  
‘ Home of my wife, this Lesbos, which for her  
‘ Had merited remorseless Cæsar’s ire :  
‘ Nor was afraid to trust you with the means  
‘ To gain his mercy. But enough—through me  
‘ Your guilt was caused—I part, throughout the world  
‘ To prove my fate. Farewell thou happiest land !  
‘ Famous for ever, whether taught by thee

- ‘ Some other kings and peoples may be pleased  
 ‘ To give me shelter ; or shouldst thou alone 160  
 ‘ Be faithful. And now seek I in what lands  
 ‘ Right may be found or wrong. My latest prayer  
 ‘ Receive, O deity, if still with me  
 ‘ Thou bidest, thus. May it be mine again,  
 ‘ Conquered, with hostile Cæsar on my track,  
 ‘ To find a Lesbos where to enter in  
 ‘ And whence to part, unhindered.’

In the boat

He placed his spouse : while from the shore arose  
 Such lamentation, and such hands were raised  
 In ire against the gods, that thou hadst deemed 170  
 All left their kin for exile, and their homes.  
 And though for Magnus grieving in his fall  
 Yet for Cornelia chiefly did they mourn  
 Long since their gentle guest. For her had wept  
 The Lesbian matrons had she left to join  
 A victor husband : for she won their love,  
 By kindly modesty and gracious mien,  
 Ere yet her lord was conquered, while as yet  
 Their fortunes stood. Now slowly to the deep  
 Sank fiery Titan ; but not yet to those 180  
 He sought (if such there be) was shown his orb,  
 Though veiled from those he quitted. Magnus’ mind,  
 Anxious with waking cares, sought through the kings  
 His subjects, and the cities leagued with Rome  
 In faith, and through the pathless tracts that lie  
 Beyond the scorching suns of southern climes :  
 Till trouble of his cares and hateful thought  
 Of that which might be, made him cast afar  
 His wavering doubts, and from the captain seek  
 Some counsel on the heavens ; how by the sky 190  
 He marked his track upon the deep ; what star

Guided the path to Syria, and what points  
 Found in the Wain would pilot him aright  
 To shores of Libya. But thus replied  
 The well-skilled watcher of the silent skies :  
 ‘ Not by the constellations moving ever  
 ‘ Across the heavens do we guide our barks ;  
 ‘ For that were perilous ; but by that star <sup>1</sup>  
 ‘ Which never sinks nor dips below the wave,  
 ‘ Girt by the glittering groups men call the Bears. 200  
 ‘ When stands the pole-star clear before the mast,  
 ‘ Then to the Bosphorus look we, and the main  
 ‘ Which carves the coast of Scythia. But the more  
 ‘ Bootes dips, and nearer to the sea  
 ‘ Is Cynosura seen, so much the ship  
 ‘ Towards Syria tends, till bright Canopus <sup>2</sup> shines,  
 ‘ In southern skies content to hold his course ;  
 ‘ With him upon the left past Pharos borne  
 ‘ Straight for the Syrtes shalt thou plough the deep.  
 ‘ But whither now dost bid me shape the yards 210  
 ‘ And set the canvas ? ’

Magnus, doubting still ;

‘ This only be thy care : from Thracia steer  
 ‘ The vessel onward ; shun with all thy skill  
 ‘ Italia’s distant shore : and for the rest  
 ‘ Trust to the winds for guidance. When I sought,  
 ‘ Pledged with the Lesbians, my spouse beloved,  
 ‘ My course was sure : now, Fortune, where thou wilt  
 ‘ Give me a refuge.’ These his answering words.

The pilot, as they hung from level yards  
 Shifted the sails ; and hauling to the stern 220  
 One sheet, he slacked the other, to the left  
 Steering, where Samian rocks and Chian marred

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Book III., 256.

<sup>2</sup> Canopus is a star in Argo, invisible in Italy. (Haskins.)

The stillness of the waters ; while the sea  
 Sent up in answer to the changing keel  
 A different murmur. Not so deftly turns  
 Curbing his steeds, his wain the Charioteer,  
 While glows his dexter wheel, and with the left  
 He almost touches, yet avoids the goal.

Now Titan veiled the stars and showed the shore ;  
 When, following Magnus, came a scattered band 230  
 Saved from the Thracian storm. From Lesbos' port  
 His son ;<sup>1</sup> next, captains who preserved their faith ;  
 For at his side, though vanquished in the field,  
 Cast down by fate, in exile, still there stood,  
 Lords of the earth and all her Orient realms,  
 The Kings, his ministers.

To the furthest lands

He bids<sup>2</sup> Deiotarus : ' O faithful friend,  
 ' Since in Emathia's battle-field was lost  
 ' The world, so far as Roman, it remains  
 ' To test the faith of peoples of the East 240  
 ' Who drink of 'Tigris and Euphrates' stream,  
 ' Secure as yet from Cæsar. Be it thine  
 ' Far as the rising of the sun to trace  
 ' ~~The fates that favour Magnus~~ : to the courts  
 ' Of Median palaces, to Scythian steppes ;  
 ' And to the son of haughty Arsaces,  
 ' To bear my message, " Hold ye to the faith,  
 ' " Pledged by your priests and by the Thunderer's name  
 ' " Of Latium sworn ? Then fill your quivers full,  
 ' " Draw to its fullest span th' Armenian bow ; 250  
 ' " And, Getan archers, wing the fatal shaft.  
 ' " And you, ye Parthians, if when I sought

<sup>1</sup> Sextus.

<sup>2</sup> Tetrarch of Galatia. He was always friendly to Rome, and in the civil war sided with Pompeius. He was at Pharsalia.



“ The Caspian gates, and on th’ Alaunian tribes  
 “ Fierce, ever-warring, pressed, I suffered you  
 “ In Persian tracts to wander, nor compelled  
 “ To seek for shelter Babylonian walls ;  
 “ If beyond Cyrus’ kingdom <sup>1</sup> and the bounds  
 “ Of wide Chaldæa, where from Nysa’s top  
 “ Pours down Hydaspes, and the Ganges stream  
 “ Foams to the ocean, nearer far I stood 260  
 “ Than Persia’s bounds to Phœbus’ rising fires ;  
 “ If by my sufferance, Parthians, you alone  
 “ Decked not my triumphs, but in equal state  
 “ Sole of all Eastern princes, face to face  
 “ Met Magnus in his pride, nor only once  
 “ Through me were saved ; (for after that dread day  
 “ Who but Pompeius soothed the kindling fires  
 “ Of Latium’s anger ?)—by my service paid  
 “ Come forth to victory : burst the ancient bounds  
 “ By Macedon’s hero set : in Magnus’ cause 270  
 “ March, Parthians, to Rome’s conquest. Rome herself  
 “ Prays to be conquered.”

Hard the task imposed ;

Yet doffed his robe, and swift obeyed, the king  
 Wrapped in a servant’s mantle. If a Prince  
 For safety play the boor, then happier, sure,  
 The peasant’s lot than lordship of the world.

The king thus parted, past Icaria’s rocks  
 Pompeius’ vessel skirts the foamy crags  
 Of little Samos : Colophon’s tranquil sea  
 And Ephesus lay behind him, and the air 280  
 Breathed freely on him from the Coan shore.  
 Cnidos he shunned, and, famous for its sun,

<sup>1</sup> Pompeius seems to have induced the Roman public to believe that he had led his armies to such extreme distances, but he never in fact did so.—Mommson, vol. iv., p. 147.



Rhodos, and steering for the middle deep  
 Escaped the windings of 'Telmessus' bay ;  
 Till rose Pamphylian coasts before the bark,  
 And first the fallen chieftain dared to find  
 In small Phaselis shelter ; for therein  
 Scarce was the husbandman, and empty homes  
 Forbad to fear. Next 'Taurus' heights he saw  
 And Dipsus falling from his lofty sides : 290  
 So sailed he onward.

Did Pompeius dream,  
 When giving safety to the seas, he made  
 Flight for himself secure ? His little boat  
 Flies unmolested past Cilician shores ;  
 But to their exiled lord in chiefest part  
 The senate of Rome was drawn. Celendræ there  
 Received their fleet, where fair Selinus' stream  
 In spacious bay gives refuge from the main ;  
 And to the gathered chiefs in mournful words  
 At length Pompeius thus resolved his thoughts : 300  
 ' O faithful comrades mine in war and flight !  
 ' To me, my country ! Though this barren shore  
 ' Our place of meeting, and no gathered host  
 ' Surrounds us, yet upon our changed estate  
 ' I seek your counsel. Rouse ye as of yore  
 ' With hearts of courage ! Magnus on the field  
 ' Not all is perished, nor do fates forbid  
 ' But that I rise afresh with living hope  
 ' Of future victories, and spurn defeat.  
 ' From Libyan ruins did not Marius rise 310  
 ' Again recorded Consul on the page  
 ' Full of his honours ? shall a lighter blow  
 ' Keep Magnus down, whose thousand chiefs and ships  
 ' Still plough the billows ; by defeat his strength  
 ' Not whelmed but scattered ? And the fame alone

' Of our great deeds of glory in the past  
 ' Shall now protect us, and the world unchanged  
 ' Still love its hero. Weigh upon the scales  
 ' Ye chiefs, which best may help the needs of Rome,  
 ' In faith and armies ; or the Parthian realm 320  
 ' Egypt or Libya. For myself, I keep  
 ' No secret thoughts apart, but thus advise.  
 ' Place no reliance on the Pharian king:  
 ' Faith, to be constant, needs a riper age ;  
 ' Nor on th' unstable cunning of the Moor,  
 ' Who vain of Punic blood, and of descent <sup>1</sup>  
 ' Supposed from Hannibal, is swollen with pride  
 ' At Varus' prayer for aid, and sees in thought  
 ' Rome's fates beneath his own. Then, comrades, seek  
 ' At speed, the Eastern world. Those mighty realms 330  
 ' Euphrates severs from us, and the gates  
 ' Called Caspian ; on another sky than ours  
 ' There day and night revolve ; another sea  
 ' Of different hue is parted from our own. <sup>2</sup>  
 ' Rule is their wish, nought else : and in their plains  
 ' Taller the war-horse, stronger twangs the bow ;  
 ' There fails nor youth nor age to wing the shaft  
 ' Fatal in flight. Their archers first subdued  
 ' The lance of Macedon and Bactra's <sup>3</sup> walls,  
 ' Home of the Mede ; and haughty Babylon 340  
 ' With all her storied towers : nor shall they dread  
 ' The Roman onset ; trusting to the shafts  
 ' By which the host of fated Crassus fell.  
 ' Nor trust they only to the javelin blade

<sup>1</sup> Juba was of supposed collateral descent from Hannibal. (Haskins, quoting 'The Scholiast.')

<sup>2</sup> Confusing the Red Sea with the Persian Gulf.

<sup>3</sup> Balkh of modern times. Bactria was one of the kingdoms established by the successors of Alexander the Great. It was, however, subdued by the Parthians about the middle of the third century B.C.

‘ Untipped with poison : from the rancorous edge  
 ‘ The slightest wound deals death.

Would that my lot

‘ Forced me not thus to trust that savage race  
 ‘ Of Arsaces !<sup>1</sup> Yet now their emulous fate  
 ‘ Contends with Roman destinies : the gods  
 ‘ Smile favouring on their nation. Thence I’ll pour 350  
 ‘ On Cæsar peoples from another earth  
 ‘ And all the Orient ravished from its home.  
 ‘ But should the East and barbarous treaties fail,  
 ‘ Fate, bear our shipwrecked fortunes past the bounds  
 ‘ Of earth, as known to men. The kings I made  
 ‘ I supplicate not, but in death shall take  
 ‘ To other spheres this solace, chief of all ;  
 ‘ His hands, my kinsman’s, never shed my blood  
 ‘ Nor soothed me dying. Yet as my mind in turn  
 ‘ The varying fortunes of my life recalls, 360  
 ‘ How was I glorious in that Eastern world !  
 ‘ How great my name by far Mæotis marsh  
 ‘ And where swift Tanais flows ! No other land  
 ‘ Has so resounded with my conquests won,  
 ‘ So sent me home triumphant. Rome, do thou  
 ‘ Approve my enterprise ! What happier chance  
 ‘ Could favouring gods afford thee ? Parthian hosts  
 ‘ Shall fight the civil wars of Rome, and share  
 ‘ Her ills, and fall enfeebled. When the arms  
 ‘ Of Cæsar meet with Parthian in the fray, 370  
 ‘ Then must kind Fortune vindicate my lot  
 ‘ Or Crassus be avenged.’

<sup>1</sup> Dion could not believe it possible that Pompeius ever contemplated taking refuge in Parthia, but Plutarch states it as a fact ; and says that it was Theophanes of Lesbos who dissuaded him from doing so. (‘Pomp.,’ 76.) Mommsen (vol. iv., pp. 421-423) discusses the subject, and says that from Parthia only could Pompeius have attempted to seek support, and that such an attempt, putting the objections to it aside, would probably have failed. Lucan’s sympathies were probably with Lentulus.

But murmurs rose,  
 And Magnus speaking knew his words condemned.  
 Then Lentulus<sup>1</sup> answered, with indignant soul,  
 Foremost to rouse their valour, thus in words  
 Worthy a Consul: 'Have Thessalian woes  
 ' Broken thy spirit so? One day's defeat  
 ' Condemned the world to ruin? Is the cause  
 ' Lost in one battle and beyond recall?  
 ' Find we no cure for wounds? Does Fortune drive 380  
 ' Thee, Magnus, to the Parthians' feet alone?  
 ' And dost thou, fugitive, spurn the lands and skies  
 ' Known heretofore, and seek for other poles  
 ' And constellations, and Chaldæan gods,  
 ' And rites barbarian, servant of the realm  
 ' Of Parthia? But why then took we arms  
 ' For love of liberty? If thou canst slave  
 ' Thou hast deceived the world! ~~Shall Parthia see~~  
 ' Thee at whose name, ruler of mighty Rome,  
 ' She trembled, at whose feet she captive saw 390  
 ' Hyrcanian kings and Indian princes kneel,  
 ' Now humbly suppliant, victim of the fates;  
 ' And at thy prayer her puny strength extol  
 ' In mad contention with the Western world?  
 ' Nor think, Pompeius, thou shalt plead thy cause  
 ' In that proud tongue unknown to Parthian ears  
 ' Of which thy fame is worthy; ~~sobs and tears~~  
 ' He shall demand of thee. And has our shame  
 ' Brought us to this, that some barbarian foe  
 ' Shall venge Hesperia's wrongs ere Rome her own? 400  
 ' Thou wert our leader for the civil war:  
 ' Mid Scythia's peoples dost thou bruit abroad

<sup>1</sup> Probably Lucius Lentulus Crus, who had been Consul, for B.C. 49, along with Caius Marcellus. (See Book V., 9.) He was murdered in Egypt by Ptolemy's ministers.

- ' Wounds and disasters which are ours alone ?  
 ' Rome until now, though subject to the yoke  
 ' Of civic despots, yet within her walls  
 ' Has brooked no foreign lord. And art thou pleased  
 ' From all the world to summon to her gates  
 ' These savage peoples, while the standards lost  
 ' By far Euphrates when the Crassi fell  
 ' Shall lead thy columns ? Shall the only king 410  
 ' Who failed Emathia, while the fates yet hid  
 ' Their favouring voices, brave the victor's power,  
 ' And join with thine his fortune ? Nay, not so  
 ' This nation trusts itself. Each race that claims  
 ' A northern birth, unconquered in the fray  
 ' Claims but the warrior's death ; but as the sky  
 ' Slopes towards the eastern tracts and gentler climes  
 ' So are the nations. There in flowing robes  
 ' And garments delicate are men arrayed.  
 ' True that the Parthian in Sarmatia's plains, 420  
 ' Where Tigris spreads across the level meads,  
 ' Contentends invincible ; for flight is his  
 ' Unbounded ; but should uplands bar his path  
 ' He scales them not ; nor through the night of war  
 ' Shall his weak bow uncertain in its aim  
 ' Repel the foeman ; nor his strength of arm  
 ' The torrent stem ; nor all a summer's day  
 ' In dust and blood bear up against the foe.  
 ' They fill no hostile trench, nor in their hands  
 ' Shall battering engine or machine of war 430  
 ' Dash down the rampart ; and whate'er avails  
 ' To stop their arrows, battles like a wall.<sup>1</sup>  
 ' Wide sweep their horsemen, fleeting in attack  
 ' And light in onset, and their troops shall yield  
 ' A camp, not take it : poisoned are their shafts ;

<sup>1</sup> That is, can be as easily defended.



‘ Nor do they dare a combat hand to hand ;  
 ‘ But as the winds may suffer, from afar  
 ‘ They draw their bows at venture. Brave men love  
 ‘ The sword which, wielded by a stalwart arm,  
 ‘ Drives home the blow and makes the battle sure. 440  
 ‘ Not such their weapons ; and the first assault  
 ‘ Shall force the flying Mede with coward hand  
 ‘ And empty quiver from the field. His faith  
 ‘ In poisoned blades is placed ; but trustest thou  
 ‘ Those who without such aid refuse the war ?  
 ‘ For such alliance wilt thou risk a death,  
 ‘ With all the world between thee and thy home ?  
 ‘ Shall some barbarian earth or lowly grave  
 ‘ Enclose thee perishing ? E’en that were shame  
 ‘ While Crassus seeks a sepulchre in vain. 450  
 ‘ Thy lot is happy ; death, unfeared by men,  
 ‘ Is thy worst doom, Pompeius ; but no death  
 ‘ Awaits Cornelia—such a fate for her  
 ‘ This king shall not reserve ; for know not we  
 ‘ The hateful secrets of barbarian love,  
 ‘ Blind as of savage beasts ? That palace knows  
 ‘ No laws of kin : the royal bed is foul  
 ‘ With concubines. The tale of that one crime  
 ‘ Of old by Ædipus unwitting wrought  
 ‘ Made nations shudder at the name of Thebes : 460  
 ‘ How many an offspring of such foul embrace  
 ‘ Has held the Parthian throne ? Where incest’s right  
 ‘ What shall be wickedness ? This gracious dame  
 ‘ Born of Metellus, noblest blood of Rome,  
 ‘ Shall share the couch of the barbarian king  
 ‘ With thousand others : yet in savage joy,  
 ‘ Proud of her former husbands, he may grant  
 ‘ Some larger share of favour ; and the fates  
 ‘ May seem to smile on Parthia ; for the spouse



‘ Of Crassus, captive, shall to him be brought 470  
‘ As spoil of former conquest. If the wound  
‘ Dealt in that fell defeat in eastern lands  
‘ Still stirs thy heart, then double is the shame  
‘ First to have waged the war upon ourselves,  
‘ Then ask the foe for succour. For what blame  
‘ Can rest on thee or Cæsar worse than this,  
‘ That in the clash of conflict ye forgot  
‘ For Crassus’ slaughtered troops the vengeance due ?  
‘ First should united Rome upon the Mede  
‘ Have poured her captains, and the troops who guard 480  
‘ The northern frontier from the Dacian hordes ;  
‘ And all her legions should have left the Rhine  
‘ Free to the Teuton, till the Parthian dead  
‘ Were piled in heaps upon the sands that hide  
‘ Our heroes slain ; and haughty Babylon  
‘ Lay at her victor’s feet. To this foul peace  
‘ We pray an end ; and if Thessalia’s day  
‘ Has closed our warfare, let the conqueror march  
‘ Straight on our Parthian foe. Then should this heart,  
‘ Then only, leap at Cæsar’s triumph won. 490  
‘ Go thou and pass Araxes’ chilly stream  
‘ On this thine errand ; and the mournful ghost  
‘ Pierced by the Scythian shaft shall greet thee thus :  
‘ “ Dost thou, to whom our wandering shades have looked  
‘ “ For vengeance and for war, seek from the foe  
‘ “ A treaty and a peace ? ” And there profuse  
‘ Shall meet thee sad memorials of the rout :  
‘ Red is yon wall where passed their headless trunks ;  
‘ Euphrates here engulfed them, Tigris there  
‘ Cast up to perish. Gaze on such array, 500  
‘ And thou canst supplicate at Cæsar’s feet  
‘ In mid Thessalia seated. Nay, thy glance  
‘ Turn on the Roman world, and if thou fear’st

' King Juba faithless and the southern realms,  
 ' Then seek we Pharos. Egypt on the west  
 ' Girt by the trackless Syrtes forces back  
 ' By sevenfold stream the ocean ; rich in glebe  
 ' And gold and merchandise ; and proud of Nile  
 ' Asks for no rain from heaven. Now holds this boy  
 ' Her sceptre, owed to thee ; his guardian thou : 510  
 ' And who shall fear this shadow of a name ?  
 ' Hope not from monarchs old, whose shame is fled,  
 ' Or laws or troth or honour of the gods :  
 ' New kings bring mildest sway.' <sup>1</sup>

His words prevailed

Upon his hearers. With what freedom speaks,  
 When states are trembling, patriot despair !  
 Pompeius' voice was quelled.

For Cyprus then

They shaped their course, whose altars more than all  
 The goddess loves who from the Paphian wave  
 Sprang, mindful of her birth, if such be truth, 520  
 And gods have origin. Past the craggy isle  
 Pompeius sailing, left at length astern  
 Its southern cape, and struck across the main  
 With winds transverse and tides ; nor reached the mount  
 Grateful to sailors for its nightly gleam :  
 But to the bounds of Egypt hardly won  
 With battling canvas, where divided Nile  
 Pours through the shallows his Pelusian stream.<sup>2</sup>  
 Now was the season when the heavenly scale

<sup>1</sup> Thus rendered by Thomas May, of the Long Parliament :

' Men used to sceptres are ashamed of nought :  
 ' The mildest government a kingdom finds  
 ' Under new kings.'

<sup>2</sup> That is, he reached the most eastern mouth of the Nile instead of the western.

Most nearly balances the varying hours, 530  
 Once only equal ; for the wintry day  
 Repays to night her losses of the spring ;  
 And Magnus learning that th' Egyptian king  
 Lay by Mount Casius, ere the sun was set  
 Or flagged his canvas, thither steered his ship.

Already had a horseman from the shore  
 In rapid gallop to the trembling court  
 Brought news their guest was come. Short was the time  
 For counsel given ; but in haste were met  
 All who advised the base Pellæan king, 540  
 Monsters, inhuman ; there Achoreus sat  
 Less harsh in failing years, in Memphis born  
 Of empty rites, and guardian of the rise <sup>1</sup>  
 Of fertilising Nile. While he was priest  
 Not only once had Apis <sup>2</sup> lived the space  
 Marked by the crescent on his sacred brow.  
 First was his voice, for Magnus raised and troth  
 And for the pledges of the king deceased :  
 But, skilled in counsel meet for shameless minds  
 And tyrant hearts, Pothinus, dared to claim 550  
 Judgment of death on Magnus. ' Laws and right  
 ' Make many guilty, Ptolemæus king.  
 ' And faith thus lauded <sup>3</sup> brings its punishment  
 ' When it supports the fallen. To the fates  
 ' Yield thee, and to the gods ; the wretched shun  
 ' But seek the happy. As the stars from earth  
 ' Differ, and fire from ocean, so from right

<sup>1</sup> At Memphis was the well in which the rise and fall of the water acted as a Nilometer (Mr Haskins's note).

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Herodotus, Book III., 27. Apis was a god who appeared at intervals in the shape of a calf with a white mark on his brow. His appearance was the occasion of general rejoicing. Cambyzes slew the Apis which came in his time, and for this cause became mad, as the Egyptians said.

<sup>3</sup> That is, by Achoreus, who had just spoken.

' Expedience.<sup>1</sup> The tyrant's shorn of strength  
 ' Who ponders justice ; and regard for right  
 ' Brings ruin on a throne. The power to sin, 560  
 ' Swords drawn at will, the tyrant king protect ;  
 ' And savage deeds find safety when they're done.  
 ' Who would be righteous, let him flee the throne,  
 ' For right's the bane of rule. He lives in dread  
 ' Who shrinks from cruelty. Nor let this chief  
 ' Unpunished scorn thy youth, who thinks that thou  
 ' Not even the conquered from our shore canst bar.  
 ' Nor to a stranger, if thou wouldst not reign,  
 ' Resign thy sceptre, for the ties of blood  
 ' Speak for thy banished sister. Let her rule 570  
 ' O'er Nile and Pharos : we shall at the least  
 ' Preserve our Egypt from the Latian arms.  
 ' What Magnus owned not ere the war was done,  
 ' No more shall Cæsar. Driven from all the world,  
 ' Trusting no more to Fortune, now he seeks  
 ' Some foreign nation which may share his fate.  
 ' Shades of the slaughtered in the civil war  
 ' Compel him : nor from Cæsar's arms alone  
 ' But from the Senate also does he fly,  
 ' Whose blood outpoured has gorged Thessalian fowl ; 580  
 ' Monarchs he fears whose all he has destroyed,  
 ' And nations piled in one ensanguined heap,  
 ' By him deserted. Victim of the blow  
 ' Thessalia dealt, refused in every land,

<sup>1</sup> Compare Ben Jonson's 'Sejanus,' Act ii., Scene 2 :—

' The prince who shames a tyrant's name to bear  
 Shall never dare do anything, but fear ;  
 All the command of sceptres quite doth perish  
 If it begin religious thoughts to cherish ;  
 Whole empires fall, swayed by these nice respects,  
 It is the licence of dark deeds protects  
 E'en states most hated, when no laws resist  
 The sword, but that it acteth what it list.'

- ' He asks for help from ours not yet betrayed.  
 ' But none than Egypt with this chief from Rome  
 ' Has juster quarrel ; who has sought with arms  
 ' To stain our Pharos, distant from the strife  
 ' And peaceful ever, and to make our realm  
 ' Suspected by his victor. Why alone 590  
 ' Should this our country please thee in thy fall ?  
 ' Why bring'st thou here the burden of thy fates,  
 ' Pharsalia's curse ? In Cæsar's eyes long since  
 ' We have offence which by the sword alone  
 ' Can find its condonation, in that we  
 ' By thy persuasion from the Senate gained  
 ' This our dominion. By our prayers we helped  
 ' If not by arms thy cause. This sword, which fate  
 ' Bids us make ready, not for thee I hold  
 ' Prepared, but for the vanquished ; and thy heart 600  
 ' (I had preferred thy kinsman's) shall I pierce :  
 ' For to his side, as all things, are we borne.  
 ' And dost thou doubt, since thou art in my power,  
 ' Thou art my victim ? By what trust in us  
 ' Cam'st thou, unhappy ? Scarce our people tills  
 ' The fields, though softened by the refluent Nile :  
 ' Know well our strength, and know we can no more.  
 ' Rome 'neath the ruin of Pompeius lies :  
 ' Shalt thou, O king, uphold him ? Shalt thou dare  
 ' To stir Pharsalia's ashes and to call 610  
 ' War to thy kingdom ? Ere the fight was fought  
 ' We joined not either army—shall we now  
 ' Make Magnus friend whom all the world deserts ?  
 ' And fling a challenge to the conquering chief  
 ' And all his proud successes ? Fair is help  
 ' Lent in disaster, yet reserved for those  
 ' Whom fortune favours. Faith her friends selects  
 ' Not from the wretched.' Then they all decree



The crime's accomplishment. Proud is the boy king  
Of such unwonted honour, that his slaves 620  
So soon give power for so great a deed.

They choose Achillas for the work of death ;  
And where the treacherous shore in Casian sands  
Runs out, and shallow waters of the sea  
Attest the Syrtes near, in little boat  
He and his partners in the monstrous crime  
With swords embark. Ye gods ! and shall the Nile  
And barbarous Memphis and th' effeminate crew  
That throngs Pelusian Canopus raise  
Its thoughts to such an enterprise ? Do thus 630  
Our fates press on the world ? Is Rome thus fallen  
That in our civil frays the Pharian sword  
Finds place, or Egypt ? O, may civil war  
Be thus far faithful that the hand which strikes  
Be of our kindred ; and the foreign fiend  
Held worlds apart ! Pompeius, great in soul,  
Noble in spirit, had deserved a death  
From Cæsar's self. And, king, hast thou no fear  
At such a ruin of so great a name ?  
And dost thou dare when heaven's high thunder rolls, 640  
Thou, puny boy, to mingle with its tones  
Thine impure utterance ? Had he not won  
A world by arms, and thrice in triumph scaled  
The sacred Capitol, and vanquished kings,  
And championed the Roman Senate's cause ;  
He, kinsman of the victor ? 'Twas enough  
To cause forbearance in a Pharian king,  
That he was Roman. Wherefore with thy sword  
Dost stab our breasts ? Thou know'st not, impious  
boy,  
How stand thy fortunes ; now no more by right 650  
Hast thou the sceptre of the land of Nile ;



For prostrate, vanquished in the civil wars  
Is he who gave it.

Furling now his sails,  
Magnus with oars approached th' accursèd land,  
When in their little boat the murderous crew  
Drew nigh, and feigning from th' Egyptian court  
A ready welcome, blamed the double tides  
Broken by shallows, and their scanty beach  
Unfit for fleets; and bade him to their craft  
Leaving his loftier ship. Had not the fates' 660  
Eternal and unalterable laws  
Called for their victim and decreed his end  
Now near at hand, his comrades' warning voice  
Yet might have stayed his course: for if the court  
To Magnus, who bestowed the Pharian crown,  
In truth were open, should not king and fleet  
In pomp have come to greet him? But he yields:  
'The fates compel. Welcome to him was death  
Rather than fear. But, rushing to the side,  
His spouse would follow, for she dared not stay, 670  
Fearing the guile. 'Then he, 'Abide, my wife,  
'And son, I pray you; from the shore afar  
'Await my fortunes; mine shall be the life  
'To test their honour.' But Cornelia still  
Withstood his bidding, and with arms outspread  
Frenzied she cried: 'And whither without me,  
'Cruel, departest? Thou forbid'st me share  
'Thy risks Thessalian; dost again command  
'That I should part from thee? No happy star  
'Breaks on our sorrow. If from every land 680  
'Thou dost debar me, why didst turn aside  
'In flight to Lesbos? On the waves alone  
'Am I thy fit companion?' Thus in vain,  
Leaning upon the bulwark, dazed with dread;

Nor could she turn her straining gaze aside,  
Nor see her parting husband. All the fleet  
Stood silent, anxious, waiting for the end :  
Not that they feared the murder which befell,  
But lest their leader might with humble prayer  
Kneel to the king he made.

As Magnus passed, 690

A Roman soldier from the Pharian boat,  
Septimius, salutes him. Gods of heaven !  
There stood he, minion to a barbarous king,  
Nor bearing still the javelin of Rome ;  
But vile in all his arms ; giant in form  
Fierce, brutal, thirsting as a beast may thirst  
For carnage. Didst thou, Fortune, for the sake  
Of nations, spare to dread Pharsalus field  
This savage monster's blows ? Or dost thou place  
Throughout the world, for thy mysterious ends, 700  
Some ministering swords for civil war ?  
Thus, to the shame of victors and of gods,  
This story shall be told in days to come :  
A Roman swordsman, once within thy ranks,  
Slave to the orders of a puny prince,  
Severed Pompeius' neck. And what shall be  
Septimius' fame hereafter ? By what name  
This deed be called, if Brutus wrought a crime ?

Now came the end, the latest hour of all :

Rapt to the boat was Magnus, of himself 710  
No longer master, and the miscreant crew  
Unsheathed their swords ; which when the chieftain saw  
He swathed his visage, for he scorned unveiled  
To yield his life to fortune ; closed his eyes  
And held his breath within him, lest some word,  
Or sob escaped, might mar the deathless fame  
His deeds had won. And when within his side

Achillas plunged his blade, nor sound nor cry  
 He gave, but calm consented to the blow  
 And proved himself in dying ; in his breast 720  
 These thoughts revolving : ‘ In the years to come  
 ‘ Men shall make mention of our Roman toils,  
 ‘ Gaze on this boat, ponder the Pharian faith ;  
 ‘ And think upon thy fame and all the years  
 ‘ While Fortune smiled : but for the ills of life  
 ‘ How thou couldst bear them, this men shall not know  
 ‘ Save by thy death. Then weigh thou not the shame  
 ‘ That waits on thine undoing. Whoso strikes,  
 ‘ The blow is Cæsar’s. Men may tear this frame  
 ‘ And cast it mangled to the winds of heaven ; 730  
 ‘ Yet have I prospered, nor can all the gods  
 ‘ Call back my triumphs. Life may bring defeat,  
 ‘ But death no misery. If my spouse and son  
 ‘ Behold me murdered, silently the more  
 ‘ I suffer : admiration at my death  
 ‘ Shall prove their love.’ So did Pompeius die,  
 And so kept guard upon his thoughts in death.  
 His spouse, less patient to behold the crime  
 Than to endure it, filled the airs with cries ;  
 ‘ O, husband, whom my wicked self hath slain ! 740  
 ‘ That lonely isle apart thy bane hath been  
 ‘ And stayed thy coming. Cæsar to the Nile  
 ‘ Has won before us ; for what other hand  
 ‘ May do such work ? But whosoe’er thou art  
 ‘ Sent from the gods with power, for Cæsar’s ire,  
 ‘ Or thine own sake, to slay, thou dost not know  
 ‘ Where lies the heart of Magnus. Thou dost haste  
 ‘ To deal the blow as he would have it fall.  
 ‘ Let me die first, and let him seeing bear  
 ‘ An agony no less than death can bring. 750  
 ‘ No freedom mine from blame of war. Alone

‘ Of Roman wives, through oceans and through camps,  
‘ Fearing no fates, I followed him afield ;  
‘ And in defeat when even monarchs feared  
‘ Received my husband. Did I then deserve  
‘ Thus to be left of thee, and didst thou seek  
‘ To spare me ? And when rushing on thine end  
‘ Was I to live ? Without the monarch’s help  
‘ Death shall be mine, either by headlong leap  
‘ Beneath the waters ; or some sailor’s hand 760  
‘ Shall bind around this neck the fatal cord ;  
‘ Or else some comrade, worthy of his chief,  
‘ Drive to my heart his blade for Magnus’ sake,  
‘ And claim the service done to Cæsar’s arms.  
‘ What ! does your cruelty withhold my fate ?  
‘ Ah ! still he lives, nor is it mine as yet  
‘ To win this freedom ; they forbid me death,  
‘ Kept for the victor’s triumph.’ Thus she spake,  
While friendly hands upheld her fainting form ;  
And sped the trembling vessel from the shore. 770

Men say that Magnus, when the deadly blows  
Fell thick upon him, lost nor form divine,  
Nor venerated mien ; and as they gazed  
Upon his lacerated head they marked  
Still on his features anger with the gods.  
For fierce Septimius in the very blow  
Made yet more black his crime—unwound the folds  
That swathed the face, and seized the noble head  
And drooping neck ere yet was fled the life :  
Then placed upon the bench ; and with his blade 780  
Slow at its hideous task, and blows unskilled  
Hacked through the flesh and brake the knotted bone ;  
For yet man had not learned by swoop of sword  
Deftly to lop the neck. Achillas claimed  
The gory head dissevered. What ! shalt thou

A Roman soldier, while thy blade yet reeks  
From Magnus' slaughter, play the second part  
To this base varlet of the Pharian king?  
Nor bear thyself the bleeding trophy home?  
Then, that the impious boy (ah ! shameful fate) 790  
Might know the features of the hero slain,  
Seized by the locks, the dread of kings, which waved  
Upon his stately front, on Pharian pike  
The head was lifted ; while almost the life  
Gave to the tongue its accents, and the eyes  
Were yet scarce glazed : that head at whose command  
Was peace or war, that tongue whose eloquent tones  
Would move assemblies, and that noble brow  
On which were showered the rewards of Rome.  
Nor to the tyrant did the sight suffice 800  
To prove the murder done. The perishing flesh,  
The tissues, and the brain he bids remove  
By art nefarious : the shrivelled skin  
Draws tight upon the bone ; and poisonous juice  
Gives to the face its lineaments in death.

Last of thy race, thou base degenerate boy,  
About to perish<sup>1</sup> soon, and yield the throne  
To thine incestuous sister ; while the Prince  
From Macedon here in consecrated vault  
Now rests, and ashes of the kings are closed 810  
In mighty pyramids, and lofty tombs  
Of thine unworthy fathers mark the graves ;  
Shall Magnus' body hither and thither borne  
Be battered, headless, by the ocean wave ?  
Too much it troubled thee to guard the corse  
Unmutilated, for his kinsman's eye  
To witness ! Such the fate which Fortune kept

<sup>1</sup> He was drowned in attempting to escape in the battle on the Nile in the following autumn.



With prosperous Pompeius to the end.  
'Twas not for him in evil days some ray  
Of light to hope for. Shattered from the height 820  
Of power in one short moment to his death !  
Years of unbroken victories balanced down  
By one day's carnage ! In his happy time  
Heaven did not harass him, nor did she spare  
In misery. Long Fortune held the hand  
That dashed him down. Now beaten by the sands,  
Torn upon rocks, the sport of ocean's waves  
Poured through its wounds, his headless carcase lies,  
Save by the lacerated trunk unknown.

Yet ere the victor touched the Pharian sands 830  
Some scanty rites to Magnus Fortune gave,  
Lest he should want all burial. Pale with fear  
Came Cordus, hasting from his hiding place ;  
Quæstor, he joined Pompeius on thy shore,  
Idalian Cyprus, bringing in his train  
A cloud of evils. Through the darkening shades  
Love for the dead compelled his trembling steps,  
Hard by the margin of the deep to search  
And drag to land his master. Through the clouds  
The moon shone sadly, and her rays were dim ; 840  
But by its hue upon the hoary main  
He knew the body. In a fast embrace  
He holds it, wrestling with the greedy sea,  
And deftly watching for a reflux wave  
Gains help to bring his burden to the land.  
Then clinging to the loved remains, the wounds  
Washed with his tears, thus to the gods he speaks,  
And misty stars obscure : ' Here, Fortune, lies  
' Pompeius, thine : no costly incense rare  
' Or pomp of funeral he dares to ask ; 850  
' Nor that the smoke rise heavenward from his pyre



' With eastern odours rich ; nor that the necks  
 ' Of pious Romans bear him to the tomb,  
 ' Their parent ; while the forums shall resound  
 ' With dirges ; nor that triumphs won of yore  
 ' Be borne before him ; nor for sorrowing hosts  
 ' To cast their weapons forth. Some little shell  
 ' He begs as for the meanest, laid in which  
 ' His mutilated corse may reach the flame.  
 ' Grudge not his misery the pile of wood  
 ' Lit by this menial hand. Is't not enough  
 ' That his Cornelia with dishevelled hair  
 ' Weeps not beside him at his obsequies,  
 ' Nor with a last embrace shall place the torch  
 ' Beneath her husband dead, but on the deep  
 ' Hard by still wanders ? '

860

#### Burning from afar

He sees the pyre of some ignoble youth  
 Deserted of his own, with none to guard :  
 And quickly drawing from beneath the limbs  
 Some glowing logs, ' Whoe'er thou art,' he said,  
 ' Neglected shade, uncared for, dear to none,  
 ' Yet happier than Pompeius in thy death,  
 ' Pardon I ask that this my stranger hand  
 ' Should violate thy tomb. Yet if to shades  
 ' Be sense or memory, gladly shalt thou yield  
 ' This from thy pyre to Magnus. 'Twere thy shame,  
 ' Blessed with due burial, if his remains  
 ' Were homeless.' Speaking thus, the wood aflame  
 Back to the headless trunk at speed he bore,  
 Which hanging on the margin of the deep,  
 Almost the sea had won. In sandy trench  
 The gathered fragments of a broken boat,  
 Trembling, he placed around the noble limbs.  
 No pile above the corse nor under lay,

870

880

Nor was the fire beneath. Then as he crouched  
Beside the blaze, 'O, greatest chief,' he cried,  
'Majestic champion of Hesperia's name,  
'If to be tossed unburied on the deep  
'Rather than these poor rites thy shade prefer,  
'From these mine offices thy mighty soul 890  
'Withdraw, Pompeius. Injuries dealt by fate  
'Command this duty, lest some bird or beast  
'Or ocean monster, or fierce Cæsar's wrath  
'Should venture aught upon thee. Take the fire ;  
'All that thou canst ; by Roman hand at least  
'Enkindled. And should Fortune grant return  
'To loved Hesperia's land, not here shall rest  
'Thy sacred ashes ; but within an urn  
'Cornelia, from this humble hand received,  
'Shall place them. Here upon a meagre stone 900  
'We draw the characters to mark thy tomb.  
'These letters reading may some kindly friend  
'Bring back thine head, dissevered, and may grant  
'Full funeral honours to thine earthly frame.'

Then did he cherish the enfeebled fire  
Till Magnus' body mingled with its flames.  
But now the harbinger of coming dawn  
Had paled the constellations : he in fear  
Seeks for his hiding place. Whom dost thou dread,  
Madman, what punishment for such a crime, 910  
For which thy fame by rumour trumpet-tongued  
Has been sent down to ages ? Praise is thine  
For this thy work, at impious Cæsar's hands ;  
Sure of a pardon, go ; confess thy task,  
And beg the head dissevered. But his work  
Was still unfinished, and with pious hand  
(Fearing some foe) he seizes on the bones  
Now half consumed, and sinews ; and the wave

Pours in upon them, and in shallow trench  
Commits them to the earth ; and lest some breeze 920  
Might bear away the ashes, or by chance  
Some sailor's anchor might disturb the tomb,  
A stone he places, and with stick half burned  
Traces the sacred name : Here *Magnus* lies.

And art thou, Fortune, pleased that such a spot  
Should be his tomb which even Cæsar's self  
Had chosen, rather than permit his corse  
To rest unburied ? Why, with thoughtless hand  
Confine his shade within the narrow bounds  
Of this poor sepulchre ? Where the furthest sand 930  
Hangs on the margin of the baffled deep  
Cabined he lies ; yet where the Roman name  
Is known, and Empire, such in truth shall be  
The boundless measure of his resting-place.  
Blot out this stone, this proof against the gods !  
Cæta finds room for Hercules alone,  
And Nysa's mountain for the Bromian god ;<sup>1</sup>  
Not all the lands of Egypt should suffice  
For Magnus dead : and shall one Pharian stone  
Mark his remains ? Yet should no turf disclose 940  
His title, peoples of the earth would fear  
To spurn his ashes, and the sands of Nile  
No foot would tread. But if the stone deserves  
So great a name, then add his mighty deeds :  
Write Lepidus conquered and the Alpine war,  
And fierce Sertorius by his aiding arm  
O'erthrown ; the chariots which as knight he drove ;<sup>2</sup>  
Cilician pirates driven from the main,  
And Commerce safe to nations ; Eastern kings

<sup>1</sup> Dionysus. But this god, though brought up by the nymphs of Mount Nysa, was not supposed to have been buried there.

<sup>2</sup> See Book VII., line 20.

Defeated and the barbarous Northern tribes ; 950  
Write that from arms he ever sought the robe ;  
Write that content upon the Capitol  
Thrice only triumphed he, nor asked his due.  
What mausoleum were for such a chief  
A fitting monument ? This paltry stone  
Records no syllable of the lengthy tale  
Of honours : and the name which men have read  
Upon the sacred temples of the gods,  
And lofty arches built of hostile spoils,  
On desolate sands here marks his lowly grave 960  
With characters obscure, such as erect  
No traveller could read, and Roman guest  
Without a hand to guide would pass unseen.

Thou land of Egypt, doomed to bear a part  
In civil warfare, not unreasoning sang  
High Cumæ's prophetess, when she forbad <sup>1</sup>  
The stream Pelusian to the Roman arms,  
And all the banks which in the summer-tide  
Are covered by his flood. What grievous curse  
Shall I call down upon thee ? May the Nile 970  
Turn back his water to his source, thy fields  
Want for the winter rain, and all the land  
Crumble to desert wastes ! We in our fanes  
Have known thine Isis and thy hideous gods,  
Half hounds, half human, and the drum that bids  
To sorrow, and Osiris, whom thy dirge <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This warning of the Sibyl is also alluded to by Cicero in a letter to P. Lentulus, Proconsul of Cilicia. (Mr. Haskins's note. See also Mommsen, vol. iv., p. 305.) It seems to have been discovered in the Sibylline books at the time when it was desired to prevent Pompeius from interfering in the affairs of Egypt, in B.C. 57.

<sup>2</sup> That is, by their weeping for his departure they treated him as a mortal and not as a god. Osiris was the soul of Apis (see on line 545), and when that animal grew old and unfit for the residence of Osiris the latter was thought to quit it. Then began the weeping, which continued until a

Proclaims for man. Thou, Egypt, in thy sand  
 Our dead containest. Nor, though her temples now  
 Serve a proud master, has Rome yet required  
 Pompeius' ashes : in a foreign land 980  
 Still lies her chief. But though men feared at first  
 The victor's ire, now, Rome, at length receive  
 Thy Magnus' bones, if still the restless wave  
 Has not prevailed upon that hated shore.  
 Shall men have fear of tombs and dread to move  
 'The dust of those who should be with the gods ?  
 O, may my country place the crime on me,  
 If crime it be, to violate such a tomb  
 Of such a hero, and to bear his dust  
 Home to Ausonia. Happy, happy he 990  
 Who bears such holy office in his trust !<sup>1</sup>  
 Haply when famine rages in the land  
 Or burning southern winds, or fires abound  
 And earthquake shocks, and Rome shall pray an end  
 From angry heaven—by the gods' command,  
 In council given, shalt thou be transferred  
 'To thine own city, and the priest shall bear  
 Thy sacred ashes to their last abode.  
 Who now may seek beneath the raging Crab  
 Or hot Syene's waste, or Thebes athirst 1000  
 Under the rainy Pleiades, to gaze  
 On Nile's broad stream ; or whoso may exchange

new Apis appeared, selected, of course, by Osiris for his dwelling-place. Then they called out ' We have found him, let us rejoice.' For a discussion on the Egyptian conception of Osiris, and his place in the theogony of that nation, see Hegel's ' Lectures on the Philosophy of History : ' Chapter on Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> It may be noted that the Emperor Hadrian raised a monument on the spot to the memory of Pompeius some sixty years after this was written (Duruy's ' History of Rome,' iii., 319). Plutarch states that Cornelia had the remains taken to Rome and interred in a mausoleum. Lucan, it may be supposed, knew nothing of this.



On the Red Sea or in Arabian ports  
Some Eastern merchandise, shall turn in awe  
To view the venerable stone that marks  
Thy grave, Pompeius ; and shall worship more  
Thy dust commingled with the arid sand,  
Thy shade though exiled, than the fane upreared <sup>1</sup>  
On Casius' mount to Jove ! In temples shrined  
And gold, thy memory were viler deemed : 1010  
Fortune lies with thee in thy lowly tomb  
And makes thee rival of Olympus' king.  
More awful is that stone by Libyan seas  
Lashed, than are Conquerors' altars. There a god  
Rests in dark earth to whom all men shall bow  
More than to gods Tarpeian : and his name  
Shall shine the brighter in the days to come  
For that no marble tomb about him stands  
Nor lofty monument. That little dust  
Time soon shall scatter and the tomb shall fall 1020  
And all the proofs shall perish of his death.  
And happier days shall come when men shall gaze  
Upon the stone, nor yet believe the tale :  
And Egypt's fable, that she holds the grave  
Of great Pompeius, be believed no more  
Than Crete's which boasts the sepulchre of Jove.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There was a temple to Jupiter on 'Mount Casius old.'

<sup>2</sup> The legend that Jove was buried in Crete is also mentioned by Cicero :  
'De Natura Deorum,' iii., 21.





BOOK IX

CATO

Apotheosis of Pompeius, lines 1-26. Cato collects the defeated forces and retreats to Africa, 26-64, and is joined by Cornelia, 64-139. Meeting of Pompeius' sons, and lamentations of Cornelia and the army, 140-223, Cato's panegyric of Pompeius, 223-263. The Cilicians wish to desert, but are recalled by Cato's words, 264-353. Cato prepares to join Juba; the Syrtes described, 355-380. The storm, 381-407. The lake of Tritonis, 408-430. Commencement of the march; Cato's address, 431-481. Libya described, 482-520. A storm of wind bursts on the army, 521-593. The temple of Hammon; Labienus urges Pompeius to consult the oracle, and he refuses, 594-688. The march, 689-727. Origin of serpents in Libya; fable of Medusa, 728-821. Catalogue of serpents, 822-863. Deaths caused by their various bites, 864-983. Complaints of the army, 984-1047. The Psylli come to their aid, 1048-1102. They arrive at Leptis, 1103-1117. Cæsar pursues Pompeius. He visits the Troad, 1118-1184, and proceeds to Egypt, 1185-1198. Pompeius' head is presented to him, 1199-1227. Cæsar's reception of the gift, 1228-1266, and his speech, 1267-1322.

## BOOK IX

### CATO

YET in those ashes on the Pharian shore,  
In that small heap of dust, was not confined  
So great a shade ; but from th' ignoble pyre  
And limbs half burnt sprang forth <sup>1</sup> and sought the sky  
Where dwells the Thunderer. Black the space of air  
Upreaching to the poles that bear on high  
The constellations in their nightly round ;  
There 'twixt the orbit of the moon and earth  
Abide those lofty spirits, half divine,  
Who by their blameless lives and fire of soul 10  
Are fit to tolerate the pure expanse  
That bounds the lower ether : there shall dwell,  
Where nor the monument encased in gold,  
Nor richest incense, shall suffice to bring  
The buried dead, in union with the spheres,  
Pompeius' spirit. When with heavenly light  
His soul was filled, first on the wandering stars  
And fixèd orbs he bent his wondering gaze ;  
Then saw what darkness veils our earthly day  
And scorned the insults heaped upon his corse. 20  
Next o'er Emathian plains he winged his flight,  
And ruthless Cæsar's standards, and the fleet

<sup>1</sup> This was the Stoic theory. The perfect of men passed after death into a region between our hemisphere and the heavens, where they remained until the day of general conflagration (see Book VII., line 955), with their senses amplified and rendered akin to divine.

Tossed on the deep : in Brutus' blameless breast  
 Tarried awhile, and roused his angered soul  
 To reap the vengeance ; last possessed the mind  
 Of haughty Cato.

He while yet the scales  
 Were poised and balanced, nor the war had given  
 The world its master, hated both the chiefs,  
 But followed Magnus for the Senate's cause  
 And for his country : now in all his heart 30  
 Was bound to Magnus, since Pharsalia's field.  
 Shorn of her guardian his country found  
 In him her guide ; the people's trembling limbs  
 He cherished with new hope, and weapons gave  
 Back to the craven hands that cast them forth.  
 Nor yet for empire did he wage the war  
 Nor fearing slavery : nor in arms achieved  
 Aught for himself : freedom, since Magnus fell,  
 The aim of all his host. And lest the foe  
 In rapid course triumphant should collect 40  
 His scattered bands, he sought Corcyra's gulfs  
 Concealed, and bore in thousand ships away  
 The fragments of the ruin wrought in Thrace.  
 Who in such mighty navy had believed  
 A host defeated sailed upon the main  
 Thronging the sea with keels? Round Malea's cape  
 And Tænarus open to the shades below  
 And fair Cythera's isle, th' advancing fleet  
 Sweeps o'er the yielding wave, by northern breeze  
 Borne past the Cretan shores. But Phycus dared 50  
 Refuse her harbour, and th' avenging hand  
 Left her in ruins. Thus with gentle airs  
 They glide along the main and reach the shore  
 From Palinurus<sup>1</sup> named ; for not alone

A promontory in Africa was so called, as well as that in Italy.

On seas Italian, Pilot of the deep,  
Hast thou thy monument ; and Libya too  
Claims that her tranquil harbours pleased thy soul.  
Then in the distance on the main arose  
The shining canvas of a stranger fleet,  
Or friend or foe they knew not. Yet they dread 60  
In every keel the presence of that chief  
Their fear-compelling conqueror. But in truth  
That navy tears and sorrow bore, and woes  
To make e'en Cato weep.

For when in vain  
Cornelia prayed her stepson and the crew  
To stay their flight, lest haply from the shore  
Back to the sea might float the headless corse ;  
And when the flame arising marked the place  
Of that unhallowed rite, ' Fortune, didst thou  
' Judge me unfit,' she cried, ' to light the pyre 70  
' To cast myself upon the hero dead,  
' The lock to sever, and compose the limbs  
' Tossed by the cruel billows of the deep,  
' To shed a flood of tears upon his wounds,  
' To fill my robe with ashes from his urn,  
' And scatter in the temples of the gods  
' All that I could, his dust ? That pyre bestows  
' No honour, haply by some Pharian hand  
' Piled up in insult to his mighty shade.  
' Happy the Crassi lying on the waste 80  
' Unburied. To the greater shame of heaven  
' Pompeius has such funeral. And shall this  
' For ever be my lot ? her husbands slain  
' Cornelia ne'er enclose within the tomb,  
' Nor shed the tear beside the urn that holds  
' The ashes of the loved ? Yet for my grief  
' What boots or monument or ordered pomp ?



- ‘ Dost thou not, impious, upon thy heart  
 ‘ Pompeius’ image, and upon thy soul  
 ‘ Bear ineffaceable? Dust closed in urns 90  
 ‘ Is for the wife who would survive her lord,  
 ‘ Not such as thee, Cornelia! And yet  
 ‘ Yon scanty light that glimmers from afar  
 ‘ Upon the Pharian shore, somewhat of thee  
 ‘ Recalls, Pompeius! Now the flame sinks down  
 ‘ And smoke drifts up across the eastern sky  
 ‘ Bearing thine ashes, and the rising wind  
 ‘ Sighs hateful in the sail. To me no more  
 ‘ Dearer than this whatever land has given  
 ‘ Pompeius victory, nor the frequent car 100  
 ‘ That carried him in triumph to the hill;  
 ‘ Gone is that happy husband from my thoughts;  
 ‘ Here did I lose the hero whom I knew;  
 ‘ Here let me stay; his presence shall endear  
 ‘ The sands of Nile where fell the fatal blow.  
 ‘ Thou, Sextus, brave the chances of the war  
 ‘ And bear Pompeius’ standard through the world.  
 ‘ For thus thy father spake within mine ear:  
 ‘ “ When sounds my fatal hour let both my sons  
 ‘ “ Urge on the war; nor let some Cæsar find 110  
 ‘ “ Room for an empire, while shall live on earth  
 ‘ “ Still one in whom Pompeius’ blood shall run.  
 ‘ “ This your appointed task; all cities strong  
 ‘ “ In freedom of their own, all kingdoms urge  
 ‘ “ To join the combat; for Pompeius calls.  
 ‘ “ Nor shall a chieftain of that famous name  
 ‘ “ Ride on the seas and fail to find a fleet.  
 ‘ “ Urged by his sire’s unconquerable will  
 ‘ “ And mindful of his rights, mine heir shall rouse  
 ‘ “ All nations to the conflict. One alone, 120  
 ‘ “ (Should he contend for freedom) may ye serve:

' " Cato, none else ! " Thus have I kept the faith ;  
 ' Thy plot <sup>1</sup> prevailed upon me, and I lived  
 ' Thy mandate to discharge. Now through the void  
 ' Of space, and shades of Hell, if such there be,  
 ' I follow ; yet how distant be my doom  
 ' I know not : first my spirit must endure  
 ' The punishment of life, which saw thine end  
 ' And could survive it ; sighs shall break my heart,  
 ' Tears shall dissolve it : sword nor noose I need 130  
 ' Nor headlong plunge. 'Twere shameful since thy death,  
 ' <sup>2</sup> Were aught but grief required to cause my own.'

She seeks the cabin, veiled, in funeral garb,  
 In tears to find her solace, and to love  
 Grief in her husband's room ; no tempest howl  
 Among the shrouds, no angered waves aroused  
 Her soul, nor cry of sailors in dismay :  
 For life their prayers ; not hers : and prone she lies  
 Resigned to death and welcoming the storm.

First reached they Cyprus on the foamy brine ; 140  
 Then as the eastern breeze more gently held  
 The favouring deep, they touched the Libyan shore  
 Where stood the camp of Cato. Sad as one  
 Who deep in fear presages ills to come,  
 Cnæus beheld his brother and his band  
 Of patriot comrades. Swift into the wave  
 He leaped and cried, ' Where, brother, is our sire ?  
 ' Still stands our country mistress of the world,  
 ' Or are we fallen, Rome with Magnus' death

<sup>1</sup> Meaning that her husband gave her this commission in order to prevent her from committing suicide.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Clarendon quotes this passage in regard to the death of Lord Falkland at the battle of Newbury :

' If there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity. Turpe mori post te solo non posse dolore.'

- ‘ Rapt to the shades ? ’ Thus he : but Sextus said 150  
 ‘ Oh happy thou who by report alone  
 ‘ Hear’st of the deed that chanced on yonder shore !  
 ‘ These eyes that saw, my brother, share the guilt.  
 ‘ Not Cæsar wrought his death, nor any chief  
 ‘ Worthy to cause the ruin of our sire.  
 ‘ He fell by order of that shameful king  
 ‘ Who rules o’er Nilus ; trusting to the gods  
 ‘ Who shield the guest, and to his princely boon  
 ‘ Of yore—a victim for the realm he gave.  
 ‘ I saw them pierce our noble father’s breast ; 160  
 ‘ Yet deeming not the petty Pharian prince  
 ‘ So fell a deed would dare, on Egypt’s strand  
 ‘ I thought great Cæsar stood. But worse than all,  
 ‘ Worse than the wounds which gaped upon his frame  
 ‘ Struck me with horror to the inmost heart,  
 ‘ Our murdered father’s head, shorn from the trunk  
 ‘ And borne aloft on javelin ; this sight,  
 ‘ As rumour said, the cruel victor asked  
 ‘ To feast his eyes, and prove the bloody deed.  
 ‘ For whether ravenous birds and Pharian dogs 170  
 ‘ Have torn his corse asunder, or a fire  
 ‘ Consumed it, which with stealthy flame arose,  
 ‘ I know not. For the fates’ unjust decree  
 ‘ Which reft his limbs asunder, I forgive  
 ‘ The gods : I weep the part preserved by men.’  
 Thus Sextus spake : but Cnæus at the tale  
 Restrained the tear, and for his father’s shame  
 Flamed into fury : ‘ Launch our navies forth,  
 ‘ Ye sailors, from the shore, by stalwart arms  
 ‘ Forced through the deep against opposing winds : 180  
 ‘ Captains, lead on : for civil strife ne’er gave  
 ‘ So great a prize ; to lay in earth the limbs  
 ‘ Of Magnus, and avenge him with the blood

‘ Of that unmanly tyrant. Shall I spare  
‘ Great Alexander’s fort, nor sack the shrine  
‘ And plunge his body in the tideless marsh ?  
‘ Nor drag Amasis from the Pyramids,  
‘ And all their ancient kings, to swim the Nile ?  
‘ Torn from his tomb, that god of all mankind  
‘ Isis, unburied, shall avenge thy shade ;  
‘ And veiled Osiris shall I hurl abroad  
‘ And sacred Apis ;<sup>1</sup> and with these their gods  
‘ I’ll light a furnace that shall burn the head  
‘ They held in insult. Thus their land shall pay  
‘ Atonement to the shade of Magnus dead.  
‘ No husbandman shall live to till the fields  
‘ Nor reap the benefit of brimming Nile.  
‘ Thou only, Father, gods and men alike  
‘ Fallen and perished, shalt possess the land.’

190

Such were the words he spake ; and soon the fleet 200  
Had dared the angry deep : but Cato’s voice  
While praising, calmed the youthful chieftain’s rage.

Meanwhile, when Magnus’ fate was known, the air  
Sounded with lamentations which the shore  
Re-echoed ; never through the ages past,  
By history recorded, was it known

That thus a people mourned their ruler’s death.  
Yet more, when worn with tears, her pallid cheek  
Veiled by her loosened tresses, from the ship  
Cornelia came, they wept and beat the breast.

210

Soon as she stood upon the friendly land,  
Ill-fated Magnus’ spoils, his arms of price,  
His gold-embroidered robe, three times of old<sup>2</sup>  
Displayed to Jove upon the hill, she placed  
Upon the mournful fire. Such was for her  
The dust of Magnus. And her love so touched

<sup>1</sup> See Book VIII., line 545.

<sup>2</sup> See line 706.

The hearts of all, that soon along the shore  
 Pyres blazed in memory of Pharsalia's dead.  
 'Tis thus in winter to depastured fields  
 By frequent fires th' Apulian herdsman seeks 220  
 To render verdant growth ; and glow with flame  
 Garganus' slopes, and Vultur, and the meads  
 Of warm Matinum.

Yet Pompeius' shade  
 Nought else so gratified, not all the blame  
 The people dared to heap upon the gods,  
 For him their hero slain, as these few words  
 From Cato's noble breast instinct with truth :  
 ' Gone is a citizen who though no peer <sup>1</sup>  
 ' Of those who disciplined the state of yore  
 ' In due submission to the bounds of right, 230  
 ' Yet in this age irreverent of law  
 ' Has played a noble part. Great was his power,  
 ' But freedom safe : when all the plebs was prone  
 ' To be his slaves, he chose the private gown ;  
 ' So that the Senate ruled the Roman state,  
 ' Its chief was Cato : nought by right of arms  
 ' He e'er demanded : willing took he gifts  
 ' Yet from a willing giver : wealth was his  
 ' Vast, yet the coffers of the State he filled  
 ' Beyond his own. He seized upon the sword, 240  
 ' Knew when to sheath it ; war did he prefer  
 ' To arts of peace, yet armed loved peace the more.  
 ' Pleased took he power, pleaséd he laid it down :  
 ' Chaste was his home and simple, by his wealth  
 ' Untarnished. Mid the peoples great his name <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This passage is described by Lord Macaulay as 'a pure gem of rhetoric without one flaw, and, in my opinion, not very far from historical truth' (Trevelyan's 'Life and Letters,' vol. i., page 432).

<sup>2</sup> . . . . . Clarum et venerabile nomen

Gentibus, et multum nostræ quod profuit urbi,'

quoted by Mr. Burke, and applied to Lord Chatham, in his Speech on American taxation.



' And venerated : to his native Rome  
 ' He wrought much good. True faith in liberty  
 ' Long since with Marius and Sulla fled :  
 ' Now when Pompeius has been reft away  
 ' Its counterfeit has perished. Now unshamed 250  
 ' Shall seize the despot on Imperial power,  
 ' Unshamed shall cringe the Senate. Happy he  
 ' Who with disaster found his latest breath  
 ' And met the Pharian sword prepared to slay.  
 ' Life might have been his lot, in despot rule,  
 ' Prone at his kinsman's throne. Best gift of all  
 ' The knowledge how to die ; next, death compelled.  
 ' If cruel Fortune doth reserve for me  
 ' An alien conqueror, may Juba be  
 ' As Ptolemæus. So he take my head 260  
 ' My body grace his triumph, if he will.'  
 More than had Rome resounded with his praise  
 Words such as these gave honour to the shade  
 Of that most noble dead.

Meanwhile the crowd

Weary of warfare, since Pompeius' fall,  
 Broke into discord, as their ancient chief  
 Cilician called them to desert the camp.  
 They seize upon their ships and float the wave ;  
 But Cato hailed them from the nearest shore ;  
 ' Untamed Cilician, is thy course now set 270  
 ' For Ocean theft again ; Pompeius gone,  
 ' Pirate art thou once more ?' Then all the air  
 Hummed with the murmur of the throng ; and one  
 Resolved on flight thus answered, ' Pardon, chief,  
 ' 'Twas love of Magnus, not of civil war,  
 ' That led us to the fight : his side was ours :  
 ' With him whom all the world preferred to peace,  
 ' Our cause is perished. Let us seek our homes  
 ' Long since unseen, our children and our wives.



' If nor the rout on dread Pharsalia's field 280  
 ' Nor yet Pompeius' death shall close the war,  
 ' Whence comes the end? Our span of life is fled :  
 ' Give death safe haven, give old age his pyre.  
 ' Scarce even to its captains civil strife  
 ' Concedes due burial. Nor in our defeat  
 ' Does Fortune threaten us with the savage yoke  
 ' Of distant nations. In the garb of Rome  
 ' And with her rights, I leave thee. Who had been  
 ' Second to Magnus living, he shall be  
 ' My first hereafter : to that sacred shade 290  
 ' Be the prime honour. Chance of war appoints  
 ' My lord but not my leader. Thee alone  
 ' I followed, Magnus ; after thee the fates.  
 ' Nor have I right to hope for victory now,  
 ' Nor wish : our Thracian array is fled  
 ' In Cæsar's triumph, whose all-potent star  
 ' Of fortune rules the world ; and none but he  
 ' Has power to keep or save. That civil war  
 ' Which while Pompeius lived was loyalty  
 ' Is impious now. Let country lead thee on, 300  
 ' Cato, and public right ; but let us seek  
 ' The standards of the Consul.' Thus he spake  
 And with him leaped into the ship a throng  
 Of eager comrades.

Then was Rome undone,

For all the shore was stirring with a crowd  
 Athirst for slavery. But burst these words  
 From Cato's blameless breast : ' Then with like vows  
 ' As Cæsar's rival host ye too did seek  
 ' A lord and master ! not for Rome the fight,  
 ' But for Pompeius ! For that now no more 310  
 ' Ye fight for tyranny, but for yourselves,  
 ' Not for some despot chief, ye live and die ;

‘ Since now ’tis safe to conquer and no lord  
 ‘ Shall rob you, victors, of a world subdued —  
 ‘ Ye flee the war, and on your abject necks  
 ‘ Feel for the absent yoke ; nor can endure  
 ‘ Without a despot ! Yet to men the prize  
 ‘ Were worth the danger. Magnus might have used  
 ‘ To evil ends your blood ; refuse ye now,  
 ‘ With liberty so near, your country’s call ? 320  
 ‘ Now lives one tyrant only of the three ;  
 ‘ Thus far in favour of the laws have wrought  
 ‘ The Pharian weapons and the Parthian bow ;  
 ‘ Not you, degenerate ! Begone, and spurn  
 ‘ This gift of Ptolemæus.<sup>1</sup> Who would think  
 ‘ Your hands were stained with blood ? The foe will deem  
 ‘ That you upon that dread Thessalian day  
 ‘ First turned your backs. Then flee in safety, flee !  
 ‘ By neither battle nor blockade subdued  
 ‘ Cæsar shall give you life ! O slaves most base, 330  
 ‘ Your former master slain, ye seek his heir !  
 ‘ Why doth it please you not yet more to earn  
 ‘ Than life and pardon ? Bear across the sea  
 ‘ Metellus’ daughter, Magnus’ weeping spouse,  
 ‘ And both his sons ; outstrip the Pharian gift.  
 ‘ Nor spare this head, which, laid before the feet  
 ‘ Of that detested tyrant, shall deserve  
 ‘ A full reward. Thus, cowards, shall ye learn  
 ‘ In that ye followed me how great your gain.  
 ‘ Quick to your task and purchase thus with blood 340  
 ‘ Your claim on Cæsar. ’Tis a dastard crime ;  
 ‘ Flight without slaughter ! ’

Cato thus recalled

The parting vessels. So when bees in swarm

<sup>1</sup> That is, liberty, which by the murder of Pompeius they had obtained.

Desert their empty comb, forget the hive,  
Ceasing to cling together, and with wings  
Untrammelled seek the air, nor slothful light  
On thyme to taste its bitterness—then rings  
The Phrygian gong—at once they pause aloft  
Astonied ; and with love of toil resumed  
Through all the flowers for their honey store 350  
In ceaseless wanderings search ; the shepherd joys,  
Sure that th' Hyblæan mead for him has kept  
His cottage store, the riches of his home.

Now in the active conduct of the war  
Were brought to discipline their minds, untaught  
To bear repose ; first on the sandy shore  
Toiling they learned fatigue : then stormed thy walls,  
Cyrene ; prizeless, for to Cato's mind  
'Twas prize enough to conquer. Juba next  
He bids approach, though Nature on the path 360  
Had placed the Syrtes ; which his sturdy heart  
Aspired to conquer. Either at the first  
When Nature gave the universe its form  
She left this region neither land nor sea ;  
Not wholly shrunk, so that it should receive  
The ocean flood ; nor firm enough to stand  
Against its buffets—all the pathless coast  
Lies in uncertain shape ; earth by the deep  
Is parted from the land ; on sandy banks  
The seas are broken, and from shoal to shoal 370  
The waves advance to sound upon the shore.  
Nature, in spite, thus left her work undone,  
Unfashioned to men's use—Or else of old  
A foaming ocean filled the wide expanse,  
But Titan feeding from the briny depths  
His burning fires (near to the zone of heat)

Reduced the waters. Still the main contends ;  
 But in long time the Sun's destructive rays  
 Shall make the Syrtes land, and shallow pools  
 E'en now proclaim the sea's defeat to come. 380

When first the billows to the fleet gave way,  
 Black from the sky rushed down a southern gale  
 Upon his realm, and from the watery plain  
 Drave back th' invading ships, and from the shoals  
 Compelled the waves, and in the middle sea  
 Raised up a bank. Forth flew the bellying sails  
 Beyond the prows, despite the ropes that dared  
 Resist the tempest's fury ; and for those  
 Who prescient housed their canvas to the storm,  
 Bare-masted they were driven from their course. 390

Best was their lot who gained the open waves  
 Of ocean ; others lightened of their masts  
 Shook off the tempest ; but a sweeping tide  
 Hurried them southwards, victor of the gale.  
 Some freed of shallows on a bank were forced  
 Which broke the deep : their ship in part was fast,  
 Part hanging on the sea ; their fates in doubt.  
 Pierce rage the waves till hems<sup>1</sup> them in the land ;  
 Nor Auster's force in frequent buffets spent  
 Prevails upon the shore. High from the main, 400  
 By seas inviolate, one bank of sand  
 Far from the coast arose ; there watched in vain  
 The storm-tossed mariners, their keel aground,  
 No shore descreying. Thus in sea were lost  
 Some portion, but the major part by helm  
 And rudder guided, and by pilots' hands  
 Who knew the devious channels, safe at length  
 Floated the marsh of Triton loved (as saith

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'sæpit,' Hosius. The passage seems to be corrupt.

The fable) by that god, whose sounding shell <sup>1</sup>  
 All seas and shores re-echo ; and by her, 410  
 Pallas, who springing from her father's head  
 First lit on Libya, nearest land to heaven,  
 (As by its heat is proved) ; here on the brink  
 She stood, reflected in the placid wave  
 And called herself Tritonis. Lethe's flood  
 Flows silent near, in fable from a source  
 Infernal sprung, oblivion in his stream ;  
 Here, too, that garden of the Hesperids,  
 Its boughs all golden, where of old his watch  
 The sleepless dragon held. Shame be on him 420  
 Who calls upon the poet for the proof  
 Of that which in the ancient days befell ;  
 But here were golden groves by yellow growth  
 Weighed down in richness, here a maiden band  
 Were guardians ; and a serpent, on whose eyes  
 Sleep never fell, was coiled around the trees,  
 Whose branches bowed beneath their ruddy load.  
 But great Alcides stripped the goodly boughs  
 Of all their riches, left them poor and light,  
 And bore the shining fruit to Argos' king. 430

Driven on the Libyan realms, more fruitful here,  
 Pompeius <sup>2</sup> stayed the fleet, nor further dared  
 To Garamantian waves. But Cato's soul  
 Leaped in his breast, impatient of delay,  
 To pass the Syrtes by a landward march,  
 And trusting to their swords, 'gainst tribes unknown  
 To lead his legions. And the storm which closed  
 The main to navies gave them hope of rain ;  
 Nor biting frosts they feared, in Libyan clime ;  
 Nor suns too scorching in the falling year. 440

<sup>1</sup> 'Scaly Triton's winding shell' ('Comus,' 873). He was Neptune's son and trumpeter.

<sup>2</sup> Cneius.



Thus ere they trod the deserts, Cato spake :  
‘ Ye men of Rome, who through mine arms alone  
‘ Can find the death ye covet, and shall fall  
‘ With pride unbroken should the fates command,  
‘ Meet this your weighty task, your high emprise  
‘ With hearts resolved to conquer. For we march  
‘ On sterile wastes, burnt regions of the world ;  
‘ Scarce are the wells, and Titan from the height  
‘ Burns pitiless, unclouded ; and the slime  
‘ Of poisonous serpents fouls the dusty earth. 450  
‘ Yet shall men venture for the love of laws  
‘ And country perishing, upon the sands  
‘ Of trackless Libya ; men who brave in soul  
‘ Rely not on the end, and in attempt  
‘ Will risk their all. ’Tis not in Cato’s thoughts  
‘ On this our enterprise to lead a band  
‘ Blind to the truth, unwitting of the risk.  
‘ Nay, give me comrades for the danger’s sake,  
‘ Whom I shall see for honour and for Rome  
‘ Bear up against the worst. But whoso needs 460  
‘ A pledge of safety, to whom life is sweet,  
‘ Let him by fairer journey seek his lord.  
‘ First be my foot upon the sand ; on me  
‘ First strike the burning sun ; across my path  
‘ The serpent void his venom ; by my fate  
‘ Know ye your perils. Let him only thirst  
‘ Who sees me at the spring : who sees me seek  
‘ The shade, alone sink fainting in the heat ;  
‘ Or whoso sees me ride before the ranks  
‘ Plodding their weary march : such be the lot 470  
‘ Of each, who, toiling, finds in me a chief  
‘ And not a comrade. Snakes, thirst, burning sand  
‘ The brave man welcomes, and the patient breast  
‘ Finds happiness in labour. By its cost



' Courage is sweeter ; and this Libyan land  
 ' Such cloud of ills can furnish as might make  
 ' Men flee unshamed.' 'Twas thus that Cato spake,  
 Kindling the torch of valour and the love  
 Of toil : then reckless of his fate he strode  
 The desert path from which was no return :  
 And Libya ruled his destinies, to shut  
 His sacred name within a narrow tomb.

480

One-third of all the world,<sup>1</sup> if fame we trust,  
 Is Libya ; yet by winds and sky she proves  
 Equal to Europe ; for the shores of Nile  
 No more than Scythian Tanais are remote  
 From furthest Gades, where with bending coast,  
 Yielding a place to Ocean, Europe parts  
 From Afric shores. Yet falls the larger world  
 To Asia only. From the former two  
 Issues the Western wind ; but Asia's right  
 Touches the Southern limits and her left  
 The Northern tempest's home, and of the East  
 She's mistress to the rising of the Sun.  
 All that is fertile of the Afric lands  
 Lies to the west, but even here abound  
 No wells of water : though the Northern wind,  
 Infrequent, leaving us with skies serene,  
 Falls there in showers. Not gold nor wealth of brass  
 It yields the seeker ; pure and unalloyed  
 Down to its lowest depths is Libyan soil.  
 Yet citron forests to Maurusian tribes  
 Were riches, had they known ; but they, content,  
 Lived 'neath the shady foliage, till gleamed  
 The axe of Rome amid the virgin grove,

490

500

<sup>1</sup> Compare Herodotus, ii., 16 : 'For they all say that the earth is divided into three parts, Europe, Asia and Libya.' See Bunbury's 'Ancient Geography,' i., 145, 146. I read 'par' in this passage, preferring it to 'pars' with Francken.

To bring from furthest limits of the world  
Our banquet tables and the fruit they bear.<sup>1</sup>  
But suns excessive and a scorching clime  
Burn all the glebe beside the shifting sands :  
There die the harvests on the crumbling mould ; 510  
No root finds sustenance, nor kindly Jove  
Makes rich the furrow nor matures the vine.  
Sleep binds all nature and the tract of sand  
Lies ever fruitless, save that by the coast  
The hardy Nasamon plucks a scanty grass.  
Unclothed their race, and living on the woes  
Worked by the cruel Syrtes on the world.  
He dwells a spoiler by the sandy waves,  
And while no ships unlade upon his shore,  
Grows rich by wrecks—his only trade with man. 520

By such a path at hardy Cato's word  
His soldiers passed, in thought from winds secure  
Nor dreading storms : but fearful was their lot  
More than on ocean waves ; for Auster's force  
Here strikes with greater strength upon the sands,  
And yet more fraught with mischief : neither crags  
Repelled his strength, nor lofty mountains tamed  
His furious onset, nor in sturdy woods  
He found a bar ; but free from curb he raged  
O'er the defenceless earth. Nor merely dust 530  
Swirled up in drifts of rain, but Earth herself,  
In major part, was rapt into the air  
On ceaseless whirlwinds borne, until amazed  
The Nasamon saw his scanty field and home  
Reft by the tempest, and the native huts  
From roof to base were hurried on the blast.  
Not higher, when some all-devouring flame

<sup>1</sup> Citron tables were in much request at Rome. (Comp. 'Paradise Regained,' Book IV., 115 ; and see Book X., line 170.)

Has seized upon its prey, in volumes dense  
 Rolls up the smoke, and darkens all the air.  
 Then with fresh might he fell upon the host 540  
 Of marching Romans, snatching from their feet  
 The sand they trod. Had Auster been enclosed  
 In some vast cavernous vault with solid walls  
 And mighty barriers, he had moved the world  
 Upon its ancient base and made the lands  
 To tremble : but the facile Libyan soil  
 By not resisting stood, and blasts that whirled  
 The surface upwards left the depths unmoved.  
 Helmet and shield and spear were torn away  
 By his most violent breath, and borne aloft 550  
 Through all the regions of the boundless sky ;  
 Perchance a wonder in some distant land,  
 Where men may fear the weapons from the heaven  
 There falling, as the armour of the gods,  
 Nor deem them ravished from a soldier's arm.  
 'Twas thus on Numa by the sacred fire  
 Those shields descended which our chosen priests<sup>1</sup>  
 Bear on their shoulders ; from some warlike race  
 By tempest rapt, to be the prize of Rome.

While thus the tempest whirled the earth aloft 560  
 Prone fell the host, and wound their garments tight,  
 And gripped the soil ; but hardly thus prevailed.  
 Weight had not held them safe ; the raging blast  
 Piles heaps upon them, their recumbent limbs  
 Are whelmed in sand. At length they struggling rose  
 Back to their feet, when lo ! around them stood,  
 Forced by the storm, a growing bank of earth

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the shield of Mars which fell from heaven on Numa at sacrifice. Eleven others were made to match it (Dict. Antiq.). While Horace speaks of them as chief objects of a patriot Roman's affection ('Odes,' iii., 5. 9), Lucan discovers for them a ridiculous origin. They were in the custody of the priests of Mars. (See Book I., 668.)

Which held them motionless. And from afar  
 Where walls lay prostrate, mighty stones were hurled,  
 Thus piling ills on ills in wondrous form : 570  
 No dwellings had they seen, yet at their feet  
 Beheld the ruins. All the earth was hid  
 In vast envelopment, nor found they guide  
 Save from the stars, which as in middle deep  
 Flamed o'er them wandering : yet some were hid  
 Beneath the circle of the Libyan earth  
 Which tending downwards hid the Northern sky.

When warmth dispersed the tempest-driven air,  
 And rose upon the earth the flaming day,  
 Bathed were their limbs in sweat, but parched and dry 580  
 Their gaping lips ; when to a scanty spring  
 Far off beheld they came, whose meagre drops  
 All gathered in the hollow of a helm  
 They offered to their chief. Caked were their throats  
 With dust, and panting ; and one little drop  
 Had made him envied. ' Wretch, and dost thou deem  
 ' Me wanting in a brave man's heart ? ' he cried,  
 ' Me only in this throng ? And have I seemed  
 ' Tender, unfit to bear the morning heat ?  
 ' He who would quench his thirst 'mid such a host, 590  
 ' Doth most deserve its pangs.' Then in his wrath  
 Dashed down the helmet, and the scanty spring,  
 Thus by their leader spurned, sufficed for all.

Now had they reached that temple which possess,  
 Sole in all Libya, th' untutored tribes  
 Of Garamantians. Here holds his seat  
 (So saith the story) a prophetic Jove,  
 Wielding no thunderbolts, nor like to ours ;  
 The Libyan Hammon of the curvèd horn.  
 No wealth adorns his fane by Afric tribes 600  
 Bestowed, nor glittering hoard of Eastern gems.

Though rich Arabians, Ind and Ethiop  
 Know him alone as Jove, still he is poor  
 Holding his shrine by riches undefiled  
 Through time ; and pure as gods of olden days  
 He spurns the wealth of Rome. That here some god  
 Dwells, witnesses the only grove  
 That buds in Libya—for that which grows  
 Upon the arid dust which Leptis parts  
 From Berenice, knows no leaves ; alone 610  
 Hammon uprears a wood ; a fount the cause  
 Which with its waters binds the crumbling soil.  
 Yet shall the Sun when poised upon the height  
 Strike through the foliage : hardly can the tree  
 Protect its trunk, and to a little space  
 His rays draw in the circle of the shade.  
 Here have men found the spot where that high band  
 Solstitial divides in middle sky <sup>1</sup>  
 The zodiac stars : not here oblique their course,  
 Nor Scorpion rises straighter than the Bull, 620  
 Nor to the Scales does Ram give back his hours,  
 Nor does Astræa bid the Fishes sink  
 More slowly down : but watery Capricorn  
 Is equal with the Crab, and with the Twins  
 The Archer ; neither does the Lion rise  
 Above Aquarius. But the race that dwells  
 Beyond the fervour of the Libyan fires  
 Sees to the South that shadow which with us  
 Falls to the North : slow Cynosura sinks <sup>2</sup>  
 For them below the deep ; and, dry with us, 630  
 The Wagon plunges ; far from either pole,  
 No star they know that does not seek the main,

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, where the equinoctial circle cuts the zodiac in its centre.—Haskins.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Book III., 294.



But all the constellations in their course  
Whirl to their vision through the middle sky.

Before the doors the Eastern peoples stood  
Seeking from hornèd Jove to know their fates :  
Yet to the Roman chief they yielded place,  
Whose comrades prayed him to entreat the gods  
Famed through the Libyan world, and judge the voice  
Renowned from distant ages. First of these 640

Was Labienus :<sup>1</sup> ‘Chance,’ he said, ‘to us  
‘The voice and counsel of this mighty god  
‘Has offered as we march ; from such a guide  
‘To know the issues of the war, and learn  
‘To track the Syrtes. For to whom on earth  
‘If not to blameless Cato, shall the gods  
‘Entrust their secret truths ? Thou at the least  
‘Their faithful follower through life hast been.  
‘Lo ! thou hast liberty to speak with Jove.  
‘Ask impious Cæsar’s fates, and learn the laws 650  
‘That wait our country in the future days :  
‘Whether the people shall be free to use  
‘Their rights and customs, or the civil war  
‘For us is wasted. To thy sacred breast,  
‘Lover of virtue, take the voice divine ;  
‘Demand what virtue is and guide thy steps  
‘By heaven’s high counsellor.’

But Cato, full  
Of godlike thoughts borne in his quiet breast,  
This answer uttered, worthy of the shrines :  
‘What, Labienus, dost thou bid me ask ? 660  
‘Whether in arms and freedom I should wish  
‘To perish, rather than endure a king ?  
‘Is longest life worth aught ? And doth its term  
‘Make difference ? Can violence to the good

<sup>1</sup> See Book V., 402.



' Do injury ? Do Fortune's threats avail  
 ' Outweighed by virtue ? Doth it not suffice  
 ' To aim at deeds of bravery ? Can fame  
 ' Grow by achievement ? Nay ! No Hammon's voice  
 ' Shall teach us this more surely than we know.  
 ' Bound are we to the gods ; no voice we need ; 670  
 ' They live in all our acts, although the shrine  
 ' Be silent : at our birth and once for all  
 ' What may be known the author of our being  
 ' Revealed ; nor chose these thirsty sands to chaunt  
 ' To few his truth, whelmed in the dusty waste.  
 ' God has his dwelling in all things that be,<sup>1</sup>  
 ' In earth and air and sea and starry vault,  
 ' In virtuous deeds ; in all that thou canst see,  
 ' In all thy thoughts contained. Why further, then,  
 ' Seek we our deities ? Let those who doubt 680  
 ' And halting, tremble for their coming fates,  
 ' Go ask the oracles. No mystic words,  
 ' Make sure my heart, but surely coming Death.  
 ' Coward alike and brave, we all must die.  
 ' Thus hath Jove spoken : seek to know no more.'

Thus Cato spoke, and faithful to his creed  
 He parted from the temple of the god  
 And left the oracle of Hammon dumb.

Bearing his javelin, as one of them  
 He strode afoot before the panting troops : 690  
 No bending neck, no litter bore his form.  
 He bade them not, but showed them how to toil.  
 Spare in his sleep, the last to sip the spring,  
 When at some rivulet to quench their thirst  
 The eager ranks pressed onward, he alone

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Wordsworth on the Imagination :—

' Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns  
 And the round ocean and the living air  
 And the blue sky and in the mind of man.'

Until the humblest follower might drink  
Stood motionless. If for the truly good  
Is fame, and virtue by the deed itself,  
Not by successful issue, should be judged,  
Yield, famous ancestors ! Fortune, not worth 700  
Gained you your glory. But such name as his  
Who ever merited by successful war  
Or slaughtered peoples ? Rather would I lead  
With him his triumphs through the pathless sands  
And Libya's bounds, than in Pompeius' car  
Three times ascend the Capitol,<sup>1</sup> or break  
The proud Jugurtha.<sup>2</sup> Rome ! in him behold  
His country's father, worthiest of thy vows ;  
A name by which men shall not blush to swear,  
Whom, shouldst thou break the fetters from thy neck, 710  
Thou mayst in distant days decree divine.

Now was the heat more dense, and through that clime  
Than which no further on the Southern side  
The gods permit, they trod ; and scarcer still  
The water, till in middle sands they found  
One copious fountain ; but its brimming wave  
Was thronged with serpents which it hardly held,  
And thirsty asps were pressing on the marge.  
But when the chieftain saw that speedy fate  
Was on the host, if they should leave the well 720  
Untasted, ' Vain,' he cried, ' your fear of death.  
' Drink, nor delay : 'tis from the threatening tooth  
' Men draw their deaths, and fatal from the fang  
' Issues the juice if mingled with the blood ;  
' The cup is harmless.' Then he sipped the fount,

<sup>1</sup> 1st. For his victories in Sicily and Africa, B.C. 81 ; 2nd. For the conquest of Sertorius, B.C. 71 ; 3rd. For his Eastern triumphs, B.C. 61. (Compare Book VIII., 953 ; VII., 16.)

<sup>2</sup> Over whom Marius triumphed.

Still doubting, and in all the Libyan waste  
There only was he first to touch the stream.

Why fertile thus in death the pestilent air  
Of Libya, what poison in her soil

Her several nature mixed, my care to know 730  
Has not availed : but from the days of old  
A fabled story has deceived the world.

Far on her limits, where the burning shore  
Admits the ocean fervid from the sun  
Plunged in its waters, lay Medusa's fields  
Untilled ; nor forests shaded, nor the plough  
Furrowed the soil, which by its mistress' gaze  
Was hardened into stone : Phorcus, her sire.

Malevolent nature from her body first  
Drew forth these noisome pests ; first from her jaws 740  
Issued the sibilant rattle of serpent tongues ;  
Clustered around her head the poisonous brood  
Like to a woman's hair, wreathed on her neck  
Which gloried in their touch ; their glittering heads  
Advanced towards her ; and her tresses kempt  
Dripped down with viper's venom. This alone  
Thou hast, accursèd one, which men can see  
Unharm'd ; for who upon that gaping mouth  
Looked and could dread ? Whom suffered she to die  
Who saw her face ? He rushed upon his fate 750  
And ere he feared was stricken to the death.  
Perished the limbs while living, and the soul  
Grew stiff and stark ere yet it fled the frame.  
Men have been frenzied by the Furies' locks,  
Not killed ; and Cerberus at Orpheus' song  
Ceased from his hissing, and Alcides saw  
The Hydra ere he slew. This monster born  
Brought horror with her birth upon her sire  
Phorcus, in second order God of Waves,

And upon Ceto and the Gorgon brood,<sup>1</sup> 760  
Her sisters. She could treat the sea and sky  
With deadly calm unknown, and from the world  
Bid cease the soil. Borne down by instant weight  
Fowls fell from air, and beasts were fixed in stone.  
Whole Ethiop tribes who tilled the neighbouring lands  
Rigid in marble stood. The Gorgon sight  
No creature bore and even her serpents turned  
Back from her visage. Atlas in his place  
Beside the Western columns, by her look  
Was turned to granite; and when Phlegra's brood 770  
Gigantic, serpent-tailed, were feared of heaven,  
She made them mountains, and the Gorgon head  
Borne on Athena's bosom closed the war.  
Here born of Danae and the golden shower,  
Floating on wings Parrhasian, by the god  
Arcadian given, author of the lyre  
And wrestling art, came Perseus, swooping down  
From heaven. Cyllenian Harpé<sup>2</sup> did he bear  
Still crimson from another monster slain,  
The guardian of the heifer loved by Jove. 780  
This to her wingèd brother Pallas lent  
Price of the monster's head : by her command  
He sought the limits of the Libyan land,  
Poised o'er Medusa's realm, with head averse  
Towards the rising sun : a burnished shield  
Of yellow brass upon his other arm,  
Her gift, her bore : in which she bade him see  
The fatal face unscathed. Nor yet in sleep

<sup>1</sup> Phorcus and Ceto were the parents of the Gorgons—Stheno, Euryale, and Medusa, of whom the latter alone was mortal. (Hesiod. Theog., 276.) Phorcus was a son of Pontus and Gaia, *ibid.* 287.

<sup>2</sup> The scimitar lent by Hermes to Perseus for the purpose; with which had been slain Argus, the guardian of Io (Conf. 'Prometheus Vincit,' 579.) Hermes was born in a cave in Mount Cyllene in Arcadia.

Lay all the monster, for such total rest  
To her were death—so fated : serpent locks 790  
In vigilant watch, some reaching forth defend  
Her head, while others lay upon her face  
And slumbering eyes. Then hero Perseus shook  
Though turned averse ; trembled his dexter hand :  
But Pallas held, and the descending blade  
Shore the broad neck whence sprang the viper brood.  
What visage bore the Gorgon as the steel  
Thus reft her life ! what poison from her throat  
Breathed ! from her eyes what venom of death distilled !  
The goddess dared not look, and Perseus' face 800  
Had frozen, averse, had not Athena veiled  
With coils of writhing snakes the features dead.  
Then with the Gorgon head the hero flew  
Uplifted on his wings and sought the sky.  
Shorter had been his voyage through the midst  
Of Europe's cities ; but Athena bade  
To spare her peoples and their fruitful lands ;  
For who when such an airy courser passed  
Had not looked up to heaven ? Western winds  
Now sped his pinions, and he took his course 810  
O'er Libya's regions, from the stars and suns  
Veiled by no culture. Phœbus' nearer track  
There burns the soil, and loftiest on the sky<sup>1</sup>  
There falls the night, to shade the wandering moon,  
If e'er forgetful of her course oblique,  
Straight through the stars, nor bending to the North  
Nor to the South, she hastens. Yet that earth,  
In nothing fertile, void of fruitful yield,  
Drank in the poison of Medusa's blood,

<sup>1</sup> The idea seems to be that the earth, bulging at the equator, casts its shadow highest on the sky : and that the moon becomes eclipsed by it whenever she follows a straight path instead of an oblique one, which may happen from her forgetfulness (Mr. Haskins's note).



Dripping in dreadful dew upon the soil, 820  
 And in the crumbling sands by heat matured.  
 Where first within the dust the venom germ<sup>1</sup>  
 Took life, an asp was reared of turgid neck  
 And sleep compelling : thick the poison drop  
 That was his making, in no fang of snake  
 More closely pressed. Greedy of warmth it seeks  
 No frozen world itself, nor haunts the sands  
 Beyond the Nile ; yet has our thirst of gain  
 No shame nor limit, and this Libyan death,  
 This fatal pest we purchase for our own. 830  
 Hæmorrhoids huge spreads out his scaly coils,  
 Who suffers not his hapless victims' blood  
 To stay within their veins. Chersydros sprang  
 To life, to dwell within the doubtful marsh  
 Where land nor sea prevails. A cloud of spray  
 Marked fell Chelyder's track : and Cenchris rose  
 Straight gliding to his prey, his belly tinged  
 With various spots unnumbered, more than those  
 Which paint the Theban marble ; hornèd snakes  
 With spines contorted : like to torrid sand 840  
 Ammodytes, of hue invisible :

<sup>1</sup> This catalogue of snakes is alluded to in Dante's 'Inferno,' 24.

' I saw a crowd within  
 ' Of serpents terrible, so strange of shape  
 ' And hideous that remembrance in my veins  
 ' Yet shrinks the vital current. Of her sands  
 ' Let Libya vaunt no more : if Jaculus,  
 ' Pareas, and Chelyder be her brood,  
 ' Cenchris and Amphisbæna, plagues so dire  
 ' Or in such numbers swarming ne'er she showed.'—Cary.

See also Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' Book X., 520-530.

' . . . . All my being,  
 ' Like him whom the Numidian Seps did thaw  
 ' Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,  
 ' Sinking through its foundations.'

Shelley, 'Prometheus Unbound,' Act iii., Scene i.



Sole of all serpents Scytale to shed  
 In vernal frosts his slough ; and thirsty Dipsas ;  
 Dread Amphibæna with his double head  
 Tapering ; and Natrix who in bubbling fount  
 Fuses his venom. Greedy Prester swells  
 His foaming jaws ; Pareas, head erect  
 Furrows with tail alone his sandy path ;  
 Swift Jaculus there, and Seps whose poisonous juice  
 Makes liquid bone and flesh : and there upreared 850  
 His regal head, and frightened from his track  
 With sibilant terror all the subject swarm,  
 Baneful ere darts his poison, Basilisk <sup>1</sup>  
 In sands deserted king. Ye serpents too  
 Who in all other regions harmless glide  
 Adored as gods, and bright with golden scales,  
 Are deadly here : for Afric air inhaled  
 Bestows malignant gift, as poised on wings  
 Whole herds of kine ye follow, and with coils  
 Encircling close, crush in the mighty bull. 860  
 Nor does the elephant in his giant bulk,  
 Nor aught, find safety ; and ye need no fang  
 Nor poison, to compel the fatal end.

Amid these pests undaunted Cato urged  
 His desert journey on. His hardy troops  
 Beneath his eyes, pricked by a scanty wound,  
 In strangest forms of death unnumbered fall.  
 Tyrrhenian Aulus, bearer of a flag,  
 Trod on a Dipsas ; quick with head reversed  
 The serpent struck ; no mark betrayed the tooth : 870  
 The aspect of the wound nor threatened death,

<sup>1</sup> The glance of the eye of the basilisk or cockatrice was supposed to be deadly. See 'King Richard III.,' Act i., Scene 2 :—

*Gloucester.* 'Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.'

*Anne.* 'Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead !'

The word is also used for a big cannon ('1 King Henry IV.,' Act ii., Scene 3).

Nor any evil ; but the poison germ  
In silence working as consuming fire  
Absorbed the moisture of his inward frame,  
Draining the natural juices that were spread  
Around his vitals ; in his arid jaws  
Set flame upon his tongue : his wearied limbs  
No sweat bedewed ; dried up, the fount of tears  
Fled from his eyelids. Tortured by the fire  
Nor Cato's sternness, nor of his sacred charge 880  
The honour could withhold him ; but he dared  
To dash his standard down, and through the plains  
Raging, to seek for water that might slake  
The fatal venom thirsting at his heart.  
Plunge him in Tanais, in Rhone and Po,  
Pour on his burning tongue the flood of Nile,  
Yet were the fire unquenched. So fell the fang  
Of Dipsas in the torrid Libyan lands ;  
In other climes less fatal. Next he seeks  
Amid the sands, all barren to the depths, 890  
For moisture : then returning to the shoals  
Laps them with greed—in vain—the briny draught  
Scarce quenched the thirst it made. Nor knowing yet  
The poison in his frame, he steels himself  
To rip his swollen veins and drink the gore.  
Cato bids lift the standard, lest his troops  
May find in thirst a pardon for the deed.

But on Sabellus' yet more piteous death  
Their eyes were fastened. Clinging to his skin  
A Seps with curving tooth, of little size, 900  
He seized and tore away, and to the sands  
Pierced with his javelin. Small the serpent's bulk ;  
None deals a death more horrible in form.  
For swift the flesh dissolving round the wound  
Bared the pale bone ; swam all his limbs in blood ;

Wasted the tissue of his calves and knees :  
 And all the muscles of his thighs were thawed  
 In black distilment, and the membrane sheath  
 Parted, that bound his vitals, which abroad  
 Flowed upon earth : yet seemed it not that all 910  
 His frame was loosed, for by the venomous drop  
 Were all the bands that held his muscles drawn  
 Down to a juice ; the framework of his chest  
 Was bare, its cavity, and all the parts  
 Hid by the organs of life, that make the man.  
 So by unholy death there stood revealed  
 His inmost nature. Head and stalwart arms,  
 And neck and shoulders, from their solid mass  
 Melt in corruption. Not more swiftly flows  
 Wax at the sun's command, nor snow compelled 920  
 By southern breezes. Yet not all is said :  
 For so to noxious humours fire consumes  
 Our fleshly frame ; but on the funeral pyre  
 What bones have perished ? These dissolve no less  
 Than did the mouldered tissues, nor of death  
 Thus swift is left a trace. Of Afric pests  
 Thou bear'st the palm for hurtfulness : the life  
 They snatch away, thou only with the life  
 The clay that held it.

Lo ! a different fate,  
 Not this by melting ! for a Prester's fang 930  
 Nasidius struck, who erst in Marsian fields  
 Guided the plough. Upon his face there burns  
 A redness as of flame : swollen the skin,  
 His features hidden, swollen all his limbs  
 Till more than human : and his definite frame  
 One tumour huge conceals. A ghastly gore  
 Is puffed from inwards as the virulent juice  
 Courses through all his body ; which, thus grown,

His corselet holds not. Not in caldron so  
Boils up to mountainous height the steaming wave ; 940  
Nor in such bellying curves does canvas bend  
To Eastern tempests. Now the ponderous bulk  
Rejects the limbs, and as a shapeless trunk  
Burdens the earth : and there, to beasts and birds  
A fatal feast, his comrades leave the corse ;  
Nor dare to place, yet swelling, in the tomb.

But for their eyes the Libyan pests prepared  
More dreadful sights. On Tullus great in heart,  
And bound to Cato with admiring soul,  
A fierce Hæmorrhoids fixed. From every limb,<sup>1</sup> 950  
(As from a statue saffron spray is showered  
In every part) there spouted forth for blood  
A sable poison : from the natural pores  
Of moisture, gore profuse ; his mouth was filled  
And gaping nostrils, and his tears were blood.  
Brimmed full his veins ; his very sweat was red ;  
All was one wound.

Then piteous Levus next  
In sleep was victim, for around his heart  
Stood still the blood congealed : no pain he felt  
Of venomous tooth, but swift upon him fell 960  
Death, and he sought the shades ; more swift to kill  
No draught in poisonous cups from ripened plants  
Of direst growth Sabæan wizards brew.

Lo ! Upon branchless trunk a serpent, named  
By Libyans Jaculus, rose in coils to dart  
His venom from afar. Through Paullus' brain  
It rushed, nor stayed ; for in the wound itself  
Was death. Then did they know how slowly flies,  
Flung from a sling, the stone ; how gently speed  
Through air the shafts of Scythia.

<sup>1</sup> See Book III., 709.

What availed, 970

Murrus, the lance by which thou didst transfix  
A Basilisk ? Swift through the weapon ran  
The poison to his hand : he drew his sword  
And severed arm and shoulder at a blow :  
Then gazed secure upon his severed hand  
Which perished as he looked. So hadst thou died,  
And such had been thy fate !

Whoe'er had thought

A scorpion had strength o'er death and fate ?  
Yet with his threatening coils and barb erect  
He won the glory of Orion <sup>1</sup> slain ; 980  
So bear the stars their witness. And who would fear  
Thy haunts, Salpuga ? <sup>2</sup> Yet the Stygian Maids  
Have given thee power to snap the fatal threads.

Thus nor the day with brightness, nor the night  
With darkness gave them peace. The very earth  
On which they lay they feared ; nor leaves nor straw  
They piled for couches, but upon the ground  
Unshielded from the fates they laid their limbs,  
Cherished beneath whose warmth in chill of night  
The frozen pests found shelter ; in whose jaws 990  
Harmless the while, the lurking venom slept.  
Nor did they know the measure of their march  
Accomplished, nor their path ; the stars in heaven  
Their only guide. ' Return, ye gods,' they cried,  
In frequent wail, ' the arms from which we fled.  
' Give back Thessalia. Sworn to meet the sword  
' Why, lingering, fall we thus ? In Cæsar's place  
' The thirsty Dipsas and the hornèd snake  
' Now wage the warfare. Rather let us seek  
' That region by the horses of the sun 1000

<sup>1</sup> According to one story Orion, for his assault on Diana, was killed by the Scorpion, who received his reward by being made into a constellation.

<sup>2</sup> A sort of venomous ant.



‘ Scorched, and the zone most torrid : let us fall  
‘ Slain by some heavenly cause, and from the sky  
‘ Descend our fate ! Not, Africa, of thee  
‘ Complain we, nor of Nature. From mankind  
‘ Cut off, this quarter, teeming thus with pests  
‘ She gave to snakes, and to the barren fields  
‘ Denied the husbandman, nor wished that men  
‘ Should perish by their venom. To the realms  
‘ Of serpents have we come. Hater of men,  
‘ Receive thy vengeance, whoso of the gods 1010  
‘ Severed this region upon either hand,  
‘ With death in middle space. Our march is set  
‘ Through thy sequestered kingdom, and the host  
‘ Which knows thy secret seeks the furthest world.  
‘ Perchance some greater wonders on our path  
‘ May still await us ; in the waves be plunged  
‘ Heaven’s constellations, and the lofty pole  
‘ Stoop from its height. By further space removed  
‘ No land, than Juba’s realm ; by rumour’s voice  
‘ Drear, mournful. Haply for this serpent land 1020  
‘ There may we long, where yet some living thing  
‘ Gives consolation. Not my native land  
‘ Nor European fields I hope for now  
‘ Lit by far other suns, nor Asia’s plains.  
‘ But in what land, what region of the sky,  
‘ Where left we Africa ? But now with frosts  
‘ Cyrene stiffened : have we changed the laws  
‘ Which rule the seasons, in this little space ?  
‘ Cast from the world we know, ’neath other skies  
‘ And stars we tread ; behind our backs the home 1030  
‘ Of southern tempests : Rome herself perchance  
‘ Now lies beneath our feet. Yet for our fates  
‘ This solace pray we, that on this our track  
‘ Pursuing Cæsar with his host may come.’



Thus was their stubborn patience of its plaints  
Disburdened. But the bravery of their chief  
Forced them to bear their toils. Upon the sand,  
All bare, he lies and dares at every hour  
Fortune to strike : he only at the fate  
Of each was present, flew to every call ;  
And roused their hearts to fight the poison germ.  
Not life he brings them, but the strength in death  
To die without a groan—to groan were shame  
When he was witness—over him what power  
Had plague or venom ? In a comrade's breast  
They see him conquer anguish ; and they learn,  
Gazing on him, how weak the power of pain.

1040

Some aid from Fortune, weary of their woes,  
At length they gained. Of all who till the earth  
The Psyllians only are by snakes unharmed.  
Potent as herbs their song ; safe is their blood,  
Nor gives admission to the poison germ  
E'en when the chant has ceased. Their home itself  
Placed in such venomous tract and serpent-thronged  
Gained them this vantage, and a truce with death,  
Else could they not have lived. Such is their trust  
In purity of blood, that newly born  
Each babe they prove by test of deadly asp  
For foreign lineage. So the bird of Jove  
Turns his new fledglings to the rising sun  
And such as gaze upon the beams of day  
With eyes unwavering, for the use of heaven  
He rears ; but such as blink at Phœbus' rays  
Casts from the nest. Thus of unmixed descent  
The babe who, dreading not the serpent touch,  
Plays in his cradle with the deadly snake.  
Nor with their own immunity from harm  
Contented do they rest, but watch for guests  
Who need their help against the noisome plague.

1050

1060

Now to the Roman standards are they come, 1070  
And when the chieftain bade the tents be fixed,  
First all the sandy space within the lines  
With song they purify and magic words  
From which all serpents flee : next round the camp  
In widest circuit from a kindled fire  
Rise aromatic odours : danewort burns,  
And juice distils from Syrian galbanum ;  
Then mournful tamarisk, costum from the East,  
Strong panacea mixed with centaury  
From Thrace, and leaves of fennel feed the flames, 1080  
And thapsus brought from Eryx : and they burn  
Larch, southern-wood and antlers of a deer  
Which lived afar. From these in densest fumes,  
Deadly to snakes, a pungent smoke arose ;  
And thus in safety passed the night away.  
But should some victim feel the fatal fang  
Upon the march, then of this magic race  
Were seen the wonders ; with saliva first  
They smear the limb, whose silent working keeps <sup>1</sup>  
The venom in the wound. From foaming mouth 1090  
Next with continuous cadence would they pour  
Unceasing chants—nor breathing space nor pause—  
Else spreads the poison : nor does fate permit  
A moment's silence. Oft from the black flesh  
Flies forth the pest beneath the magic song :  
But should it linger nor obey the voice,  
Repugnant to the summons, on the wound  
Prostrate they lay their lips and from the depths  
Now paling draw the venom. In their mouths,  
Sucked from the freezing flesh, they hold the death, 1100  
Then spew it forth ; and from the taste shall know  
The nature of the snake whose bite they cure.

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'tacitâ' (Francken), instead of 'tactâ.'

Thus helped, the Roman host with lighter heart  
 Trod through the barren fields in lengthy march.<sup>1</sup>  
 Twice veiled the moon her light and twice renewed ;  
 Yet still, with waning or with growing orb  
 Saw Cato's steps upon the sandy waste.  
 But more and more beneath their feet the dust  
 Began to harden, till the Libyan tracts  
 Once more were earth, and in the distance rose 1110  
 Some groves of scanty foliage, and huts  
 Of plastered straw unfashioned : and their hearts  
 Leaped at the prospect of a better land.  
 How fled their sorrow ! how with growing joy  
 They met the savage lion in the path !  
 In tranquil Leptis first they found retreat :  
 And passed a winter free from heat and rain.<sup>2</sup>

When Cæsar sated with Emathia's slain  
 Forsook the battlefield, all other cares  
 Neglected, he pursued his kinsman fled, 1120  
 On him alone intent : by land his steps  
 He traced in vain ; then, rumour for his guide,  
 He crossed the sea and reached the Thracian strait  
 For love renowned ; where on the mournful shore  
 Rose Hero's tower, and Helle born of cloud<sup>3</sup>  
 Took from the rolling waves their former name.  
 Nowhere with shorter space the sea divides  
 Europe from Asia ; though Pontus parts

<sup>1</sup> No other author gives any details of this march ; and those given by Lucan are unreliable. The temple of Hammon is far from any possible line of route taken from the Lesser Syrtes to Leptis. Dean Merivale states that the inhospitable sands extended for seven days' journey, and ranks the march as one of the greatest exploits in Roman military history. Described by the names known to modern geography, it was from the Gulf of Cades to Cape Africa. Pope, in a letter to Henry Cromwell, dated November 11, 1710, makes some caustic remarks on the geography of this book. (See Pope's Works, Vol. VI., 109 ; by Elwin & Courthope.)

<sup>2</sup> Line 439.

<sup>3</sup> Book IV., 65.

By scant division from Byzantium's hold  
 Chalcedon oyster-rich : and small the strait 1130  
 Through which Propontis pours the Euxine wave.  
 Then marvelling at their ancient fame, he seeks  
 Sigeum's sandy beach and Simois' stream,  
 Rhœteum noble for its Grecian tomb,  
 And all the heroes' shades, the theme of song.  
 Next by the town of Troy burnt down of old  
 Now but a memorable name, he turns  
 His steps, and searches for the mighty stones  
 Relics of Phœbus' wall. But bare with age  
 Forests of trees and mouldering trunks oppressed 1140  
 Assaracus' palace, and with wearied roots  
 Possessed the ancient temples of the gods.  
 All Pergamus with densest brake was veiled  
 And even her stones were perished. He beheld  
 Thy rock, Hesione ; the hidden grove,  
 Anchises' nuptial chamber ; and the cave  
 Where sat the arbiter ; the spot from which  
 Was snatched the beauteous youth ; the mountain lawn  
<sup>1</sup> Where mourned CEnone. Not a stone but told  
 The story of the past. A little stream 1150  
 Scarce trickling through the arid plain he passed,  
 Nor knew 'twas Xanthus : deep in grass he placed,  
 Careless, his footstep ; but the herdsman cried  
 ' Thou tread'st the dust of Hector.' Stones confused  
 Lay at his feet in sacred shape no more :  
 ' Look on the altar of Jove,' thus spake the guide,  
 ' God of the household, guardian of the home.'  
 O sacred task of poets, toil supreme,  
 Which rescuing all things from allotted fate  
 Dost give eternity to mortal men ! 116  
 Grudge not the glory, Cæsar, of such fame.

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'luxerit' for 'luserit.' Francken.

For if the Latian Muse may promise aught,  
 Long as the heroes of the Trojan time  
 Shall live upon the page of Smyrna's bard,  
 So long shall future races read of thee  
 In this my poem ; and Pharsalia's song  
 Live unforgotten in the age to come.

When by the ancient grandeur of the place  
 The chieftain's sight was filled, of gathered turf  
 Altars he raised : and as the sacred flame 1170  
 Cast forth its odours, these not idle vows  
 Gave to the gods, ' Ye deities of the dead,  
 ' Who watch o'er Phrygian ruins : ye who now  
 ' Lavinia's homes inhabit, and Alba's height :  
 ' Gods of my sire Æneas, in whose fanes  
 ' The Trojan fire still burns : pledge of the past  
 ' Mysterious Pallas,<sup>1</sup> of the inmost shrine,  
 ' Unseen of men ! here in your ancient seat,  
 ' Most famous offspring of Iulus' race,  
 ' I call upon you and with pious hand 1180  
 ' Burn frequent offerings. To my emprise  
 ' Give prosperous ending ! Here shall I replace  
 ' The Phrygian peoples, here in glad return  
 ' Italia's sons shall build a Pergamus  
 ' And from these stones shall rise a Roman Troy.'

He seeks his fleet, and eager to regain  
 Time spent at Ilium, to the favouring breeze  
 Spreads all his canvas. Past rich Asia borne,  
 Rhodes soon he left while foamed the sparkling  
 main

Beneath his keels ; nor ceased the wind to stretch 1190  
 His bending sails, till on the seventh night  
 The Pharian beam proclaimed Egyptian shores.  
 But day arose, and veiled the nightly lamp

<sup>1</sup> The 'Palladium' or image of Pallas, preserved in the temple of Vesta.  
 (See Book I., 662.)



Ere rode his barks on waters safe from storm.  
Then Cæsar saw that tumult held the shore,  
And mingled voices of uncertain sound  
Struck on his ear : and trusting not himself  
To doubtful kingdoms, of uncertain troth,  
He kept his ships from land. But from the king  
Came his vile minion forth upon the wave, 1200  
Bearing his dreadful gift, Pompeius' head,  
Wrapped in a covering of Pharian wool.  
First took he speech and thus in shameless words  
Commends the murder : ' Conqueror of the world,  
' First of the Roman race, and, what as yet  
' Thou dost not know, safe by thy kinsman slain ;  
' This gift receive from the Pellæan king,  
' Sole trophy absent from the Thracian field,  
' To crown thy toils on land and on the deep.  
' Here in thine absence have we placed for thee 1210  
' An end upon the war. Here Magnus came  
' To mend his fallen fortunes ; on our swords  
' Here met his death. With such a pledge of faith  
' Here have we bought thee, Cæsar ; with his blood  
' Seal we this treaty. Take the Pharian realm  
' Sought by no bloodshed, take the rule of Nile,  
' Take all that thou wouldst give for Magnus' life :  
' And hold him vassal worthy of thy camp  
' To whom the fates against thy son-in-law  
' Such power entrusted ; nor hold thou the deed 1220  
' Lightly accomplished by the swordsman's stroke,  
' And so the merit. Guest ancestral he  
' Who was its victim ; who, his sire expelled,  
' Gave back to him the sceptre. For a deed  
' So great, thou'lt find a name—or ask the world.  
' If 'twas a crime, thou must confess the debt  
' To us the greater, for that from thy hand  
' We took the doing.'



Then he held and showed  
Unveiled the head. Now had the hand of death  
Passed with its changing touch upon the face : 1230  
Nor at first sight did Cæsar on the gift  
Pass condemnation ; nor avert his gaze,  
But dwelt upon the features till he knew  
The crime accomplished. Then when truth was sure  
The loving father rose, and tears he shed  
Which flowed at his command, and glad in heart  
Forced from his breast a groan : thus by the flow  
Of feignèd tears and grief he hoped to hide  
His joy else manifest : and the ghastly boon  
Sent by the king disparaging, professed 1240  
Rather to mourn his son's dissevered head,  
Than count it for a debt. For thee alone,  
Magnus, he durst not fail to find a tear :  
He, Cæsar, who with mien unaltered spurned  
The Roman Senate, and with eyes undimmed  
Looked on Pharsalia's field. O fate most hard !  
Didst thou with impious war pursue the man  
Whom 'twas thy lot to mourn ? No kindred ties,  
No memory of thy daughter and her son  
Touch on thy heart ? Didst think perchance that grief 1250  
Might help thy cause 'mid lovers of his name ?  
Or haply, moved by envy of the king,  
Griev'st that to other hands than thine was given  
To shed the captive's life-blood ? and complain'st  
Thy vengeance perished and the conquered chief  
Snatched from thy haughty hand ? Whate'er the cause  
That urged thy grief, 'twas far removed from love.  
Was this forsooth the object of thy toil  
O'er lands and oceans, that without thy ken  
He should not perish ? Nay ! but well was reft 1260  
From thine arbitrament his fate. What crime

Did cruel Fortune spare, what depth of shame  
To Roman honour ! since she suffered not,  
Perfidious traitor, while yet Magnus lived,  
That thou shouldst pity him !

Thus by words he dared

To gain their credence in his sembled grief :

- ‘ Hence from my sight with his detested gift,  
‘ Thou minion, to thy king. Worse does your crime  
‘ Deserve from Cæsar than from Magnus’ hands.  
‘ The only prize that civil war affords 1270  
‘ Thus have we lost—to bid the conquered live.  
‘ If but the sister of this Pharian king  
‘ Were not by him detested, by the head  
‘ Of Cleopatra had I paid this gift.  
‘ Such were the fit return. Why did he draw  
‘ His separate sword, and in the toil that’s ours  
‘ Mingle his weapons ? In Thessalia’s field  
‘ Gave we such right to the Pellæan blade ?  
‘ Such licence did your mutual kingdom gain ?  
‘ Magnus as partner in the rule of Rome 1280  
‘ I had not brooked ; and shall I tolerate  
‘ Thee, Ptolemæus ? In vain with civil wars  
‘ Thus have we roused the nations, if there be  
‘ Now any might but Cæsar’s, if any land  
‘ Yet owns you masters. From your shore I’d turn  
‘ The prows of Latium ; but fame forbids,  
‘ Lest men should whisper that I did not damn  
‘ This deed of blood, but feared the Pharian land.  
‘ Nor think ye to deceive ; victorious here  
‘ I stand : else had my welcome at your hands 1290  
‘ Been that of Magnus ; and that neck were mine  
‘ But for Pharsalia’s chance. At greater risk  
‘ So seems it, than we dreamed of, took we arms ;  
‘ Exile, and Magnus’ threats, and Rome I knew,

' Not Ptolemæus. But we spare the boy :  
 ' Pass by the murder. Let the princeling know  
 ' We give no more than pardon for his crime.  
 ' And now in honour of the mighty dead,  
 ' Not merely that the earth may hide your guilt,  
 ' Lay ye the chieftain's head within the tomb ; 1300  
 ' With proper sepulture appease his shade  
 ' And place his scattered ashes in an urn.  
 ' Thus may he know my coming, and may hear  
 ' Affection's accents, and my fond complaints.  
 ' Me sought he not, but rather, for his life,  
 ' This Pharian vassal ; snatching from mankind  
 ' The happy morning which had shown the world  
 ' A peace between us. But my prayers to heaven  
 ' No favouring answer found ; that arms laid down  
 ' In happy victory, Magnus, once again 1310  
 ' I might embrace thee, begging thee to grant  
 ' Thine ancient love to Cæsar, and thy life.  
 ' Thus for my labours with a worthy prize  
 ' Content, thine equal, bound in faithful peace,  
 ' I might have brought thee to forgive the gods  
 ' For thy disaster ; thou hadst gained for me  
 ' From Rome forgiveness.'

Thus he spake, but found  
 No comrade in his tears ; nor did the host  
 Give credit to his grief. Deep in their breasts  
 They hide their groans, and gaze with joyful front 1320  
 (O famous Freedom !) on the deed of blood :  
 And dare to laugh when mighty Cæsar wept.

BOOK X  
CÆSAR IN EGYPT

Cæsar visits the tomb of Alexander, 1-60. Cleopatra comes to Cæsar and asks for protection, 61-126. Banquet, 127-203. Cæsar questions Achoreus, 204-229. His reply upon the stars, the source of the Nile, and its course, 230-400. Pothinus stirs up Achilles to murder Cæsar, 401-482. The troops are collected and Cæsar is besieged in the palace, 484-612. Cæsar occupies Pharos, 613-664; and the poem ends.

## BOOK X

### *CÆSAR IN EGYPT*

WHEN Cæsar, following those who bore the head,  
First trod the shore accursed, with Egypt's fates  
His fortunes battled, whether Rome should pass  
In crimson conquest o'er the guilty land,  
Or Memphis' arms should ravish from the world  
Victor and vanquished : and the warning shade  
Of Magnus saved his kinsman from the sword.

By that dread crime assured, his standards borne  
Before, he marched upon the Pharian town ;  
But when the people, jealous of their laws, 10  
Murmured against the fasces, Cæsar knew  
Their minds were adverse, and that not for him  
Was Magnus' murder wrought. And yet with brow  
Dissembling fear, intrepid, through the shrines  
Of Egypt's gods he strode, and round the fane  
Of ancient Isis ; bearing witness all  
To Macedon's vigour in the days of old.  
Yet did nor gold nor ornament restrain  
His hasting steps, nor worship of the gods,  
Nor city ramparts : but in greed of gain 20  
He sought the cave dug out amid the tombs.<sup>1</sup>  
The madman offspring there of Philip lies,  
The famed Pellæan robber, Fortune's friend,

<sup>1</sup> The body of Alexander was embalmed, and the mummy placed in a glass case. The sarcophagus which enclosed them is stated to be now in the British Museum.



Snatched off by fate, in vengeance for the world.  
In sacred sepulchre the hero's limbs,  
Which should be scattered o'er the earth, repose,  
Still spared by Fortune to these tyrant days :  
For in a world to freedom once recalled,  
All men had mocked the dust of him who set  
The baneful lesson that so many lands 30  
Can serve one master. Macedon he left  
His home obscure ; Athena he despised,  
The conquest of his sire, and spurred by fate  
Through Asia rushed with havoc of mankind,  
Plunging his sword through peoples ; red with blood  
1 Unknown to them Euphrates, Ganges ran.  
Curse of all earth, fell star of evil fate  
To every nation ! On the outer sea  
He launched his fleet to sail the ocean wave :  
Nor flame nor flood nor sterile Libyan sands 40  
Stayed back his course, nor Hammon's pathless shoals ;  
Far to the west, where downward slopes the world  
He would have led his armies, and the poles  
Had compassed, and had drunk the fount of Nile :  
But came his latest day ; such end alone  
Could nature place upon the madman king,  
Who jealous in death as when he won the world  
His empire with him took, nor left an heir.  
Thus every city to the spoiler's hand  
Was victim made. Yet in his fall was his 50  
Babylon ; and Parthia feared him. Shame on us  
That Eastern nations dreaded more the lance  
Of Macedon than now the Roman spear.  
True that we rule beyond where takes its rise  
The burning southern breeze, beyond the homes  
Of western winds, and to the northern star ;

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'ignoto' (Francken).

But towards the rising of the sun, we yield  
To him who kept the Arsacids in awe ;  
And puny Pella held as province sure  
The Parthia fatal to our Roman arms.

60

Now from the stream Pelusian of the Nile,  
Was come the boyish king, taming the rage  
Of his effeminate people : pledge of peace ;  
And Cæsar safely trod Pellæan halls ;  
When Cleopatra bribed her guard to break  
The harbour chains, and borne in little boat  
Within the Macedonian palace gates,  
Cæsar unknowing, entered : Egypt's shame ;  
Fury of Latium ; to the bane of Rome  
Unchaste. For as the Spartan queen of yore 70  
By fatal beauty Argos urged to strife  
And Ilium's homes, so Cleopatra roused  
Italia's frenzy. By her drum <sup>1</sup> she called  
Down on the Capitol terror (if to speak  
Such word be lawful) ; mixed with Roman arms  
Coward Canopus, hoping she might lead  
A Pharian triumph, Cæsar in her train ;  
And 'twas in doubt upon Leucadian <sup>2</sup> waves  
Whether a woman, not of Roman blood,  
Should hold the world in awe. Such lofty thoughts 80  
Seized on her soul upon that night in which  
The wanton daughter of Pellæan kings  
First shared our leaders' couches. Who shall blame  
Antonius for the madness of his love,  
When Cæsar's haughty breast drew in the flame ?  
Who red with carnage, 'mid the clash of arms,

<sup>1</sup> The kettledrum used in the worship of Isis. (See Book VIII., line 975.)

<sup>2</sup> At the Battle of Actium. The island of Leucas, close to the promontory of Actium, is always named by Lucan when he refers to this battle. (See also Virgil, 'Æneid,' viii., 677.)

In palace haunted by Pompeius' shade,  
 Gave place to love ; and in adulterous bed,  
 Magnus forgotten, from the Queen impure,  
 To Julia gave a brother : on the bounds 99  
 Of furthest Libya permitting thus  
 His foe to gather : while in dalliance base  
 He waited on his mistress, and to her  
 Pharos would give ; for her would conquer all.

Then Cleopatra, trusting to her charms,  
 Tearless approached him, though in form of grief ;  
 Her tresses loose as though in sorrow torn,  
 So best becoming her ; and thus began :  
 ' If, mighty Cæsar, aught to noble birth  
 ' Be due, give ear. Of Lagian race am I 100  
 ' Offspring illustrious ; from my father's throne  
 ' Cast forth to banishment ; unless thy hand  
 ' Restore to me the sceptre : then a Queen  
 ' Falls at thy feet embracing. To our race  
 ' Bright star of justice thou ! Nor first shall I  
 ' As woman rule the cities of the Nile ;  
 ' For, neither sex preferring, Pharos bows  
 ' To queenly governance. Of my parted sire  
 ' Read the last words, by which 'tis mine to share  
 ' With equal rights the kingdom and the bed. 110  
 ' And the boy loves his sister, were he free ;  
 ' But his affections and his sword alike  
 ' Pothinus orders. Nor wish I myself  
 ' To wield my father's power ; but this my prayer :  
 ' Save from this foul disgrace our royal house,  
 ' Bid that the king shall reign, and from the court  
 ' Remove this hateful varlet, and his arms.  
 ' How swells his bosom for that his the hand  
 ' That shore Pompeius' head ! And now he threats  
 ' Thee, Cæsar, also ; which the Fates avert ! 120

‘ Shame on the earth and thee that Magnus’ death  
‘ Should be Pothinus’ triumph or his guilt.’

Her words were nothing to his stubborn ear ;  
Her face achieved the prayer, her wanton smile,  
The long voluptuous night of shame untold :  
So did she bribe her judge ; so Cæsar fell.

When she had purchased at so vast a price  
Peace from the chief,<sup>1</sup> the joys of such a peace  
A feast proclaimed. There in full pomp the Queen  
Displayed her luxuries, as yet unknown 130  
To Roman manners. Spacious rose the hall  
Like to such fane as this corrupted age  
Shall scarcely rear : the lofty ceiling shone  
With richest tracery, the beams were bound  
In golden coverings ; no scant veneer  
Lay on its walls, but built in solid blocks  
Of marble, gleamed the palace. Agate stood  
In sturdy columns, bearing up the roof ;  
Onyx and porphyry on the spacious floor  
Were trodden ’neath the foot ; the mighty gates 140  
Of Marœ’s ebony throughout were formed,  
No mere adornment ; ivory clothed the hall,  
Studded with emerald spots ; upon the doors  
Gleamed polished tortoise shells from Indian seas :  
And gems of price and yellow jasper shone  
On couch and coverlet, whose greater part  
Dipped more than once within the vats of Tyre  
Had drunk their juice ; and part were feathered gold ;  
Part crimson dyed, in manner as are passed  
Through Pharian leash the threads. There waited slaves  
In number as a people, some in ranks 151  
By different blood distinguished, some by age ;  
This band with Libyan, that with auburn hair

<sup>1</sup> Reading ‘ ducis ’ (Francken).

Red so that Cæsar on the banks of Rhine  
None such had witnessed ; some with features scorched  
By torrid suns, their locks in twisted coils  
Drawn from their foreheads. Eunuchs too were there,  
Unhappy race ; and on the other side  
Men of full age whose cheeks with growth of hair  
Were hardly darkened.

Upon either hand

160

Lay kings, and Cæsar in the midst supreme.  
There in her fatal beauty lay the Queen  
Thick daubed with unguents, nor with throne content  
Nor with her brother spouse ; laden she lay  
On neck and hair with all the Red Sea spoils,  
And faint beneath the weight of gems and gold.  
Her snowy breast shone through Sidonian lawn  
Which woven close by shuttles of the East  
The art of Nile had loosened. Ivory feet  
Bore citron tables brought from woods that wave <sup>1</sup> 170  
On Atlas, such as Cæsar never saw  
When Juba was his captive. Blind in soul  
By madness of ambition, thus to fire  
By such profusion of her wealth, the mind  
Of Cæsar armed, her guest in civil war !  
Not though he aimed with pitiless hand to grasp  
The riches of a world ; not though were here  
Those ancient leaders of the simple age,  
Fabricius or Curius stern of soul,  
Or he who, Consul, left in sordid garb 180  
His Tuscan plough, could all their several hopes  
Have risen to such spoil. On plates of gold  
They piled the banquet sought in earth and air  
And from the deepest seas and Nilus' waves,  
Through all the world ; in craving for display,

<sup>1</sup> Book IX., 507.



No hunger urging. Frequent birds and beasts,  
 Egypt's high gods, they placed upon the board :  
 In crystal goblets water of the Nile  
 They handed, and in massive cups of price  
 Was poured the wine ; no juice of Mareot grape,<sup>1</sup> 190  
 But noble vintage of Falernian growth  
 Which seasons few in Merœe's famous vats  
 Had mellowed as with age. Upon their brows  
 Chaplets were placed of roses ever young  
 With glistening nard entwined ; and in their locks  
 Was cinnamon infused, not yet in air  
 Its fragrance perished, nor in foreign climes ;  
 And rich amomum from the neighbouring fields.  
 Thus Cæsar learned the booty of a world  
 To lavish, and his breast was shamed of war 200  
 Waged with his son-in-law, from whose defeat  
 His spoils were meagre, and he longed to find  
 A cause of battle with the Pharian realm.

When of the banquet and of wine and feast  
 They wearied and their pleasure found an end,  
 Cæsar drew out in colloquy the night  
 Thus with Achoreus, on the highest couch  
 With linen ephod as a priest begirt :

' O thou devoted to all sacred rites,  
 ' Loved by the gods, as proves thy length of days, 210  
 ' Tell, if thou wilt, whence sprang the Pharian race ;  
 ' How lie their lands, the manners of their tribes,  
 ' The form and worship of their deities.  
 ' Expound the sculptures on your ancient fanes :  
 ' Reveal your gods if willing to be known :  
 ' If to th' Athenian sage your fathers taught  
 ' Their mysteries, who worthier than I

<sup>1</sup> Yet the Mareot grape was greatly celebrated. (See Professor Rawlinson's note to Herodotus, ii., 18.)



' To bear in trust the secrets of the world ?  
 ' True, by the rumour of my kinsman's flight  
 ' Here was I drawn ; yet also by your fame : 220  
 ' And even in the midst of war's alarms  
 ' The stars and heavenly spaces have I conned ;  
 ' Nor shall Eudoxus' year<sup>1</sup> excel mine own.  
 ' But though such ardour burns within my breast,  
 ' Such zeal to know the truth, yet my chief wish  
 ' To learn the source of your mysterious flood  
 ' Through ages hidden : give me certain hope  
 ' To see the fount of Nile—and civil war  
 ' I quit for ever.'

He spake, and then the priest :

' The secrets, Cæsar, of our mighty sires<sup>2</sup> 230  
 ' Kept from the common people until now  
 ' I hold it right to utter. Some may deem  
 ' That silence on these wonders of the earth  
 ' Were greater piety. But to the gods  
 ' I hold it grateful that their handiwork  
 ' And sacred edicts should be known to men.  
 ' A different power by the primal law,  
 ' Each star possesses :<sup>3</sup> these alone control  
 ' The movement of the sky, with adverse force  
 ' Opposing : while the sun divides the year, 240  
 ' And day from night, and by his potent rays  
 ' Forbids the stars to pass their stated course.

<sup>1</sup> The calendar introduced by Cæsar, in B.C. 45, was founded on the Egyptian or solar year. (See Herodotus, ii., 4.) Eudoxus seems to have dealt with this year and to have corrected it. He is probably alluded to by Virgil, 'Eclogue' iii., 41.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotus was less fortunate. For he says, 'Concerning the nature of the river I was not able to gain any information either from the priests or others.' (ii., 19.)

<sup>3</sup> It was supposed that the Sun and Moon and the planets (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, and Venus) were points which restrained the motion of the sky in its revolution. (See Book VI., 576.)

‘ The moon by her alternate phases sets  
 ‘ The varying limits of the sea and shore.  
 ‘ Neath Saturn’s sway the zone of ice and snow  
 ‘ Has passed ; while Mars in lightning’s fitful flames  
 ‘ And winds abounds : beneath high Jupiter  
 ‘ Unvexed by storms abides a temperate air ;  
 ‘ And fruitful Venus’ star contains the seeds  
 ‘ Of all things. Ruler of the boundless deep 250  
 ‘ The god <sup>1</sup> Cyllenian : whene’er he holds  
 ‘ That part of heaven where the Lion dwells  
 ‘ With neighbouring Cancer joined, and Sirius star  
 ‘ Flames in its fury ; where the circular path  
 ‘ (Which marks the changes of the varying year)  
 ‘ Gives to hot Cancer and to Capricorn  
 ‘ Their several stations, under which doth lie  
 ‘ The fount of Nile, he, master of the waves,  
 ‘ Strikes with his beam the waters. Forth the stream  
 ‘ Brims from his fount, as Ocean when the moon 260  
 ‘ Commands an increase ; nor shall curb his flow  
 ‘ Till night wins back her losses from the sun.<sup>2</sup>  
 ‘ Vain is the ancient faith that Ethiop snows <sup>3</sup>  
 ‘ Send Nile abundant forth upon the lands.  
 ‘ Those mountains know nor northern wind nor star.  
 ‘ Of this are proof the breezes of the South,  
 ‘ Fraught with warm vapours, and the people’s hue  
 ‘ Burned dark by suns : and ’tis in time of spring,  
 ‘ When first are thawed the snows, that ice-fed streams  
 ‘ In swollen torrents tumble ; but the Nile 270

<sup>1</sup> Mercury. (See Book IX., 778.)

<sup>2</sup> That is, at the autumnal equinox. The priest states that the planet Mercury causes the rise of the Nile. The passage is difficult to follow ; but the idea would seem to be that this god, who controlled the rise and fall of the waves of the sea, also when he was placed directly over the Nile caused the rise of that river.

<sup>3</sup> So also Herodotus, Book II., 22. Yet modern discoveries have proved the snows.

' Nor lifts his wave before the Dog star burns ;  
 ' Nor seeks again his banks, until the sun  
 ' In equal balance measures night and day.  
 ' Nor are the laws that govern other streams  
 ' Obeyed by Nile. For in the wintry year  
 ' Were he in flood, when distant far the sun,  
 ' His waters lacked their office ; but he leaves  
 ' His channel when the summer is at height,  
 ' Tempering the torrid heat of Egypt's clime.  
 ' Such is the task of Nile ; thus in the world  
 ' He finds his purpose, lest exceeding heat  
 ' Consume the lands : and rising thus to meet  
 ' Enkindled Lion, to Syene's prayers  
 ' By Cancer burnt gives ear ; nor curbs his wave  
 ' Till the slant sun and Meröe's lengthening shades  
 ' Proclaim the autumn. Who shall give the cause ?  
 ' 'Twas Parent Nature's self which gave command  
 ' Thus for the needs of earth should flow the Nile.

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' Vain too the fable that the western winds <sup>1</sup>  
 ' Control his current, in continuous course  
 ' At stated seasons governing the air ;  
 ' Or hurrying from Occident to South  
 ' Clouds without number which in misty folds  
 ' Press on the waters ; or by constant blast,  
 ' Forcing his current back whose several mouths  
 ' Burst on the sea ;—so, forced by seas and wind,  
 ' Men say, his billows pour upon the land.  
 ' Some speak of hollow caverns, breathing holes  
 ' Deep in the earth, within whose mighty jaws  
 ' Waters in noiseless current underneath  
 ' From northern cold to southern climes are drawn ;  
 ' And when hot Meröe pants beneath the sun,

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<sup>1</sup> So, too, Herodotus, Book II., 20, who attributes this theory to Greeks who wish to get a reputation for cleverness.

‘ Then, say they, Ganges through the silent depths  
 ‘ And Padus pass : and from a single fount  
 ‘ The Nile arising not in single streams  
 ‘ Pours all the rivers forth. And rumour says  
 ‘ That when the sea which girdles in the world <sup>1</sup>  
 ‘ O’erflows, thence rushes Nile, by lengthy course,  
 ‘ Softening his saltness. More, if it be true  
 ‘ That ocean feeds the sun and heavenly fires, 310  
 ‘ Then Phœbus journeying by the burning Crab  
 ‘ Sucks from its waters more than air can hold  
 ‘ Upon his passage—this the cool of night  
 ‘ Pours on the Nile.

‘ If, Cæsar, ’tis my part  
 ‘ To judge such difference, ’twould seem that since  
 ‘ Creation’s age has passed, earth’s veins by chance  
 ‘ Some waters hold, and shaken cast them forth :  
 ‘ But others took when first the globe was formed  
 ‘ A sure abode ; by Him who framed the world  
 ‘ Fixed with the Universe.

‘ And, Roman, thou, 320  
 ‘ In thirsting thus to know the source of Nile,  
 ‘ Dost as the Pharian and Persian kings  
 ‘ And those of Macedon ; nor any age  
 ‘ Refused the secret, but the place prevailed  
 ‘ Remote by nature. Greatest of the kings  
 ‘ By Memphis worshipped, Alexander grudged <sup>2</sup>  
 ‘ To Nile its mystery, and to furthest earth  
 ‘ Sent chosen Ethiops whom the crimson zone  
 ‘ Stayed in their further march, while flowed his stream

<sup>1</sup> See on Book V., 712. Herodotus mentions this theory also, to dismiss it.

<sup>2</sup> The historians state that Alexander made an expedition to the temple of Jupiter Hammon and consulted the oracle. Jupiter assisted his march, and an army of crows pointed out the path (Plutarch). It is, however, stated, in a note in Langhorne’s edition, that Maximus Tyrius informs us that the object of the journey was the discovery of the sources of the Nile.

' Warm at their feet. Sesostris <sup>1</sup> westward far 330  
 ' Reached, to the ends of earth ; and necks of kings  
 ' Bent 'neath his chariot yoke : but of the springs  
 ' Which fill your rivers, Rhone and Po, he drank,  
 ' Not of the fount of Nile. Cambyzes king  
 ' In madman quest led forth his host to where  
 ' The long-lived races dwell : then famine struck,  
 ' Ate of his dead <sup>2</sup> and, Nile unknown, returned.  
 ' No lying rumour of thy hidden source  
 ' Has e'er made mention ; wheresoe'er thou art  
 ' Yet art thou sought, nor yet has nation claimed 340  
 ' In pride of place thy river as its own.  
 ' Yet shall I tell, so far as has the god,  
 ' Who veils thy fountain, given me to know,  
 ' Thy progress. Daring to upraise thy banks  
 ' 'Gainst fiery Cancer's heat, thou tak'st thy rise  
 ' Beneath the zenith : straight towards the north  
 ' And mid Bootes flowing ; to the couch  
 ' Bending, or to the risings, of the sun  
 ' In sinuous bends alternate ; just alike  
 ' To Araby's peoples and to Libyan sands. 350  
 ' By Seres <sup>3</sup> first beheld, yet know they not  
 ' Whence art thou come ; and with no native stream  
 ' Strik'st thou the Ethiop fields. Nor knows the world  
 ' To whom it owes thee. Nature ne'er revealed  
 ' Thy secret origin, removed afar.  
 ' Nor did she wish thee to be seen of men

<sup>1</sup> Sesostris, the great king, does not appear to have pushed his conquests to the west of Europe.

<sup>2</sup> See Herodotus, III., 17. These Ethiopian races were supposed to live to the age of 120 years, drinking milk, and eating boiled flesh. On Cambyzes's march his starving troops cast lots by tens for the one man who was to be eaten.

<sup>3</sup> The Seres are, of course, the Chinese. The ancients seem to have thought that the Nile came from the east. But it is possible that there was another tribe of this name dwelling in Africa.



- ‘ While still a tiny rivulet, but preferred  
‘ Their wonder to their knowledge. Where the sun  
‘ Stays at his limit, dost thou rise in flood  
‘ Untimely ; such thy right : to other lands 360  
‘ Bearing thy winter : and by both the poles  
‘ Thou only wanderest. Here men ask thy rise  
‘ And there thine ending. Meröe rich in soil  
‘ And tilled by swarthy husbandmen divides  
‘ Thy broad expanse, rejoicing in the leaves  
‘ Of groves of ebony, which though spreading far  
‘ Their branching foliage, by no breadth of shade  
‘ Soften the summer sun—whose rays direct  
‘ Pass from the Lion to the fervid earth.<sup>1</sup>  
‘ Next dost thou journey onwards past the realm 370  
‘ Of burning Phœbus, and the sterile sands,  
‘ With equal volume ; now with all thy strength  
‘ Gathered in one, and now in devious streams  
‘ Parting the bank that crumbles at thy touch.  
‘ Then by our kingdom’s gates, where Philæ parts  
‘ Arabian peoples from Egyptian fields  
‘ The sluggish bosom of thy flood recalls  
‘ Thy wandering currents, which through desert wastes  
‘ Flow gently on to where the merchant track  
‘ Divides the Red Sea waters from our own. 380  
‘ Who, gazing, Nile, upon thy tranquil flow,  
‘ Could picture how in wild array of foam  
‘ (Where shelves the earth) thy billows shall be plunged  
‘ Down the steep cataracts, in fuming wrath  
‘ That rocks should bar the passage of thy stream  
‘ Free from its source ? For whirled on high the spray  
‘ Aims at the stars, and trembles all the air

<sup>1</sup> A passage of difficulty. I understand it to mean that at this spot the summer sun (in Leo) strikes the earth with direct rays.



‘ With rush of waters ; and with sounding roar  
‘ The foaming mass down from the summit pours  
‘ In hoary waves victorious. Next an isle 390  
‘ In all our ancient lore “untrodden” named  
‘ Stems firm thy torrent ; and the rocks we call  
‘ Springs of the river, for that here are marked  
‘ The earliest tokens of the coming flood.  
‘ With mountain shores now nature hems thee in  
‘ And shuts thy waves from Libya ; in the midst  
‘ Hence do thy waters run, till Memphis first  
‘ Forbids the barrier placed upon thy stream  
‘ And gives thee access to the open fields.’

Thus did they pass, as though in peace profound, 400  
The nightly watches. But Pothinus’ mind,  
Once with accursèd butchery imbued,  
Was frenzied still ; since great Pompeius fell  
No deed to him was crime ; his rabid soul  
Th’ avenging goddesses and Magnus’ shade  
Stirred to fresh horrors ; and a Pharian hand  
No less was worthy, as he deemed, to shed  
That blood which Fortune purposed should bedew  
The conquered fathers : and the fell revenge  
Due to the senate for the civil war 410  
This hireling almost snatched. Avert, ye fates,  
Far hence the shame that not by Brutus’ hand  
This blow be struck ! Shall thus the tyrant’s fall,  
Just at our hands, become a Pharian crime.  
Reft of example ? To prepare a plan  
(Fated to fail) he dares ; nor veils in fraud  
A plot for murder, but with open war  
Attacks th’ unconquered chieftain : from his crimes  
He gained such courage as to send command  
To lop the head of Cæsar, and to join 420  
In death the kinsmen chiefs.

These words by night

His faithful servants to Achillas bear,  
His foul associate, whom the boy had made  
Chief of his armies, and who ruled alone  
O'er Egypt's land and o'er himself her king :  
' Now lay thy limbs upon the sumptuous couch  
' And sleep in luxury, for the Queen hath seized  
' The palace ; nor alone by her betrayed,  
' But Cæsar's gift, is Pharos. Dost delay  
' Nor hasten to the chamber of thy Queen ? 430  
' Thou only ? Married to the Latian chief,  
' The impious sister now her brother weds  
' And hurrying from rival spouse to spouse  
' Hath Egypt won, and plays the bawd for Rome.  
' By amorous potions she has won the man :  
' Then trust the boy ! Yet give him but a night  
' In her enfondling arms, and drunk with love  
' Thy life and mine he'll barter for a kiss.  
' We for his sister's charms by cross and flame  
' Shall pay the penalty : nor hope of aid ; 440  
' Here stands adulterous Cæsar, here the King  
' Her spouse : how hope we from so stern a judge  
' To gain acquittal ? Shall she not condemn  
' Those who ne'er sought her favours ? By the deed  
' We dared together and lost, by Magnus' blood  
' Which wrought the bond between us, be thou swift  
' With hasty tumult to arouse the war :  
' Dash in with nightly band, and mar with death  
' Their shameless nuptials : on the very bed  
' With either lover smite the ruthless Queen. 450  
' Nor let the fortunes of the Western chief  
' Make pause our enterprise. We share with him  
' The glory of his empire o'er the world.  
' Pompeius fallen makes us too sublime.

' There lies the shore that bids us hope success :  
 ' Ask of our power from the polluted wave,  
 ' And gaze upon the scanty tomb which holds  
 ' Not all Pompeius' ashes. Peer to him  
 ' Was he whom now thou fearest. Noble blood,  
 ' True, is not ours : what boots it ? Nor are realms 460  
 ' Nor wealth of peoples given to our command.  
 ' Yet have we risen to a height of power  
 ' For deeds of blood, and Fortune to our hands  
 ' Attracts her victims. Lo ! a nobler now  
 ' Lies in our compass, and a second death  
 ' Hesperia shall appease ; for Cæsar's blood,  
 ' Shed by these hands, shall give us this, that Rome  
 ' Shall love us, guilty of Pompeius' fall.  
 ' Why fear these titles, why this chieftain's strength ?  
 ' For shorn of these, before your swords he lies 470  
 ' A common soldier. To the civil war  
 ' This night shall bring completion, and shall give  
 ' To peoples slain fit offerings, and send  
 ' That life the world demands beneath the shades.  
 ' Rise then in all your hardihood and smite  
 ' This Cæsar down, and let the Roman youths  
 ' Strike for themselves, and Lagos for its King.  
 ' No do thou tarry : full of wine and feast  
 ' Thou'lt fall upon him in the lists of love ;  
 ' Then dare the venture, and the heavenly gods 480  
 ' Shall grant of Cato's and of Brutus' prayers  
 ' To thee fulfilment.'

Nor was Achilles slow  
 To hear the voice that counselled him to crime.  
 No sounding clarion summoned, as is wont,  
 His troops to arms ; nor trumpet blare betrayed  
 Their nightly march : but rapidly he seized  
 All needed instruments of blood and war.

Of Latian race the most part of his train,  
 Yet to barbarian customs were their minds  
 By long forgetfulness of Rome debased : 490  
 Else had it shamed to serve the Pharian King ;  
 But now his vassal and his minion's word  
 Compel obedience. Those who serve in camps  
 Lose faith and love of kin : their pittance earned <sup>1</sup>  
 Makes just the deed : and for their sordid pay,  
 Not for themselves, they threaten Cæsar's life.  
 Where finds the piteous destiny of the realm  
 Rome with herself at peace ? The host withdrawn  
 From dread 'Thessalia raves on Nilus' banks  
 As all the race of Rome. What more had dared, 500  
 With Magnus welcomed, the Laguean house ?  
 Each hand must render to the gods their due,  
 Nor son of Rome may cease from civil war ;  
 By Heaven's command our state was rent in twain ;  
 Nor love for husband nor regard for sire  
 Parted our peoples. 'Twas a slave who stirred  
 Afresh the conflict, and Achillas grasped  
 In turn the sword of Rome : nay more, had won,  
 Had not the fates adverse restrained his hand  
 From Cæsar's slaughter.

For the murderous pair 510  
 Ripe for their plot were met ; the spacious hall  
 Still busied with the feast. So might have flowed  
 Into the kingly cups a stream of gore,  
 And in mid banquet fallen Cæsar's head.  
 Yet did they fear lest in the nightly strife  
 (The fates permitting) some incautious hand—  
 So did they trust the sword—might slay the King.  
 Thus stayed the deed, for in the minds of slaves  
 The chance of doing Cæsar to the death

<sup>1</sup> Reading 'ibi fas ubi proxima merces,' with Hosius and Francken.

Might bear postponement : when the day arose 520  
Then should he suffer ; and a night of life  
Thus by Pothinus was to Cæsar given.

Now from the Casian rock looked forth the Sun  
Flooding the land of Egypt with a day  
Warm from its earliest dawn, when from the walls  
Not wandering in disorder are they seen,  
But drawn in close array, as though to meet  
A foe opposing ; ready to receive  
Or give the battle. Cæsar, in the town  
Placing no trust, within the palace courts 530  
Lay in ignoble hiding place, the gates  
Close barred : nor all the kingly rooms possessed,  
But in the narrowest portion of the space  
He drew his band together. There in arms  
They stood, with dread and fury in their souls.  
He feared attack, indignant at his fear.  
Thus will a noble beast in little cage  
Imprisoned, fume, and break upon the bars  
His teeth in frenzied wrath ; nor more would rage  
The flames of Vulcan in Sicilian depths 540  
Should Etna's top be closed. He who but now  
By Hæmus' mount against Pompeius chief,  
Italia's leaders and the Senate line,  
His cause forbidding hope, looked at the fates  
He knew were hostile, with unfaltering gaze,  
Now fears before the crime of hireling slaves,  
And in mid palace trembles at the blow :  
He whom nor Scythian nor Alaun had dared  
To violate, nor the Moor who aims the dart  
Upon his victim slain, to prove his skill. 550  
The Roman world but now did not suffice  
To hold him, nor the realms from furthest Ind  
To Tyrian Gades. Now, as puny boy,



Or woman, trembling when a town is sacked,  
Within the narrow corners of a house  
He seeks for safety ; on the portals closed  
His hope of life : and with uncertain gait  
He treads the halls ; yet not without the King ;  
In purpose, Ptolemæus, that thy life  
For his shall give atonement ; and to hurl 560  
Thy severed head among the servant throng  
Should darts and torches fail. So story tells  
The Colchian princess<sup>1</sup> with sword in hand,  
And with her brother's neck bared to the blow,  
Waited her sire, avenger of his realm  
Despoiled, and of her flight. In the imminent risk  
Cæsar, in hopes of peace, an envoy sent  
To the fierce vassals, from their absent lord  
Bearing a message, thus : ' At whose command  
' Wage ye the war ? ' But not the laws which bind 570  
All nations upon earth, nor sacred rights,  
Availed to save or messenger of peace,  
Or King's ambassador ; or thee from crime  
Such as befitted thee, thou land of Nile  
Fruitful in monstrous deeds : not Juba's realm,  
Vast though it be, nor Pontus, nor the land  
Thessalian, nor the arms of Pharnaces,  
Nor yet the tracts which chill Iberus girds,  
Nor Libyan coasts such wickedness have dared,  
As thou, and all thy minions. Closer now 580  
War hemmed them in, and weapons in the courts,  
Shaking the innermost recesses, fell.  
Yet did no ram, fatal with single stroke,  
Assail the portal, nor machine of war ;

<sup>1</sup> Medea, who fled from Colchis with her brother, Absyrtus. Pursued by her father Æetes, she killed her brother and strewed the parts of his body into the sea. The king paused to collect them.



Nor flame they called in aid ; but blind of plan  
 They wander purposeless, in separate bands  
 Around the circuit, nor at any spot  
 With strength combined attempt to breach the wall.  
 The fates forbad, and Fortune from their hands  
 Held fast the palace as a battlement. 590

Nor failed they to attack from ships of war  
 The regal dwelling, where its frontage bold  
 Made stand apart the waters of the deep :  
 There, too, was Cæsar's all-protecting arm ;  
 For these at point of sword, and those with fire  
 He forces back, and though besieged he dares  
 To storm th' assailants : and as lay the ships  
 Joined rank to rank, bids drop upon their sides  
 Lamps drenched with reeking tar. Nor slow the fire  
 To seize the hempen cables and the decks 600  
 Oozing with melting pitch ; the oarsman's bench  
 All in one moment, and the topmost yards  
 Burst into flame : half merged the vessels lay  
 While swam the foemen, all in arms, the wave ;  
 Nor fell the blaze upon the ships alone,  
 But seized with writhing tongues the neighbouring  
 homes,<sup>1</sup>

And fanned to fury by the Southern breeze  
 Tempestuous, it leaped from roof to roof ;  
 Not otherwise than on its heavenly track,  
 Unfed by matter, glides the ball of light, 610  
 By air alone aflame.

This pest recalled  
 Some of the forces to the city's aid  
 From the besieged halls. Nor Cæsar gave  
 To sleep its season ; swifter than all else

<sup>1</sup> It was in this conflagration that a large part of the library of the Ptolemies was destroyed. 400,000 volumes are stated to have perished.

To seize the crucial moment of the war.  
Quick in the darkest watches of the night  
He leaped upon his ships, and Pharos <sup>1</sup> seized,  
Gate of the main ; an island in the days  
Of Proteus seer, now bordering the walls  
Of Alexander's city. Thus he gained  
A double vantage, for his foes were pent  
Within the narrow entrance, which for him  
And for his aids gave access to the sea.

620

Nor longer was Pothinus' doom delayed,  
Yet not with cross or flame, nor with the wrath  
His crime demanded ; nor by savage beasts  
Torn, did he suffer ; but by Magnus' death,  
Alas the shame ! he fell ; his head by sword  
Hacked from his shoulders. Next by frauds prepared  
By Ganymede her base attendant, fled

630

<sup>2</sup> Arsinoë from the Court to Cæsar's foes ;  
There in the absence of the King she ruled  
As of Laguean blood : there at her hands,  
The savage minion of the tyrant boy,  
Achillas, fell by just avenging sword.  
Thus did another victim to thy shade  
Atone, Pompeius ; but the gods forbid  
That this be all thy vengeance ! Not the King  
Nor all the stock of Lagos for thy death  
Would make fit sacrifice ! So Fortune deemed ;  
And not till patriot swords shall drink the blood  
Of Cæsar, Magnus, shalt thou be appeased.  
Still, though was slain the author of the strife,

640

<sup>1</sup> The island of Pharos, which lay over against the port of Alexandria, had been connected with the mainland in the middle by a narrow causeway. On it stood the lighthouse. (See Book IX., 1192.) Proteus, the old man of the sea, kept here his flock of seals, according to the Homeric story. ('Odyssey,' Book IV., 400.)

<sup>2</sup> Younger sister of Cleopatra.

Sank not their rage : with Ganymede for chief  
Again they rush to arms ; in deeds of fight  
Again they conquer. So might that one day  
Have witnessed Cæsar's fate ; so might its fame  
Have lived through ages.

As the Roman Chief,  
Crushed on the narrow surface of the mole,  
Prepared to throw his troops upon the ships, 650  
Sudden upon him the surrounding foes  
With all their terrors came. In dense array  
Their navy lined the shores, while on the rear  
The footmen ceaseless charged. No hope was left,  
For flight was not, nor could the brave man's arm  
Achieve or safety or a glorious death.  
Not now were needed for great Cæsar's fall,  
Caught in the toils of nature, routed host  
Or mighty heaps of slain : his only doubt  
To fear or hope for death : while on his brain 660  
Brave Scæva's image flashed, now vainly sought,  
Who on the wall by Epidamnus' fields  
Earned fame immortal, and with single arm  
Drove back Pompeius as he trod the breach.

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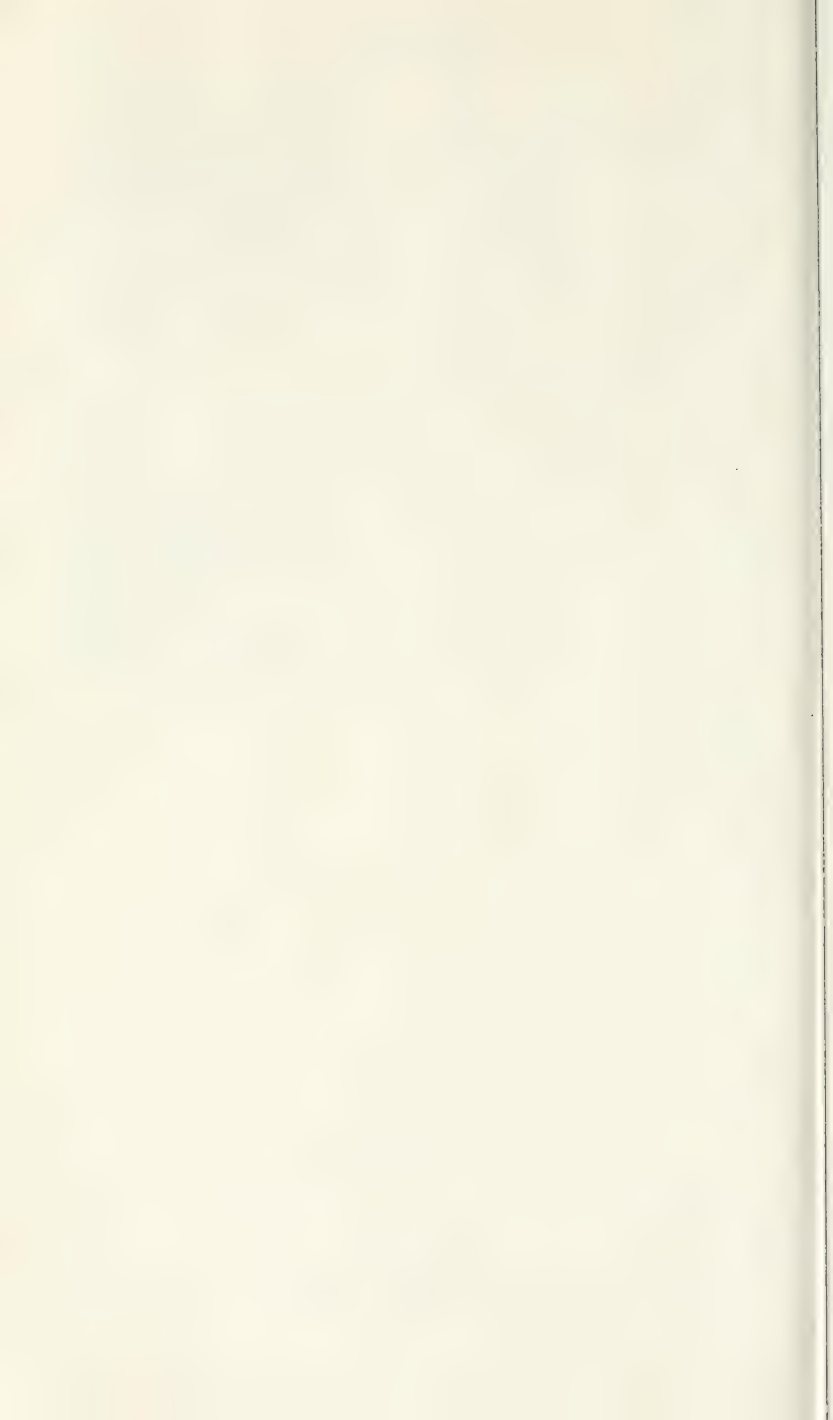
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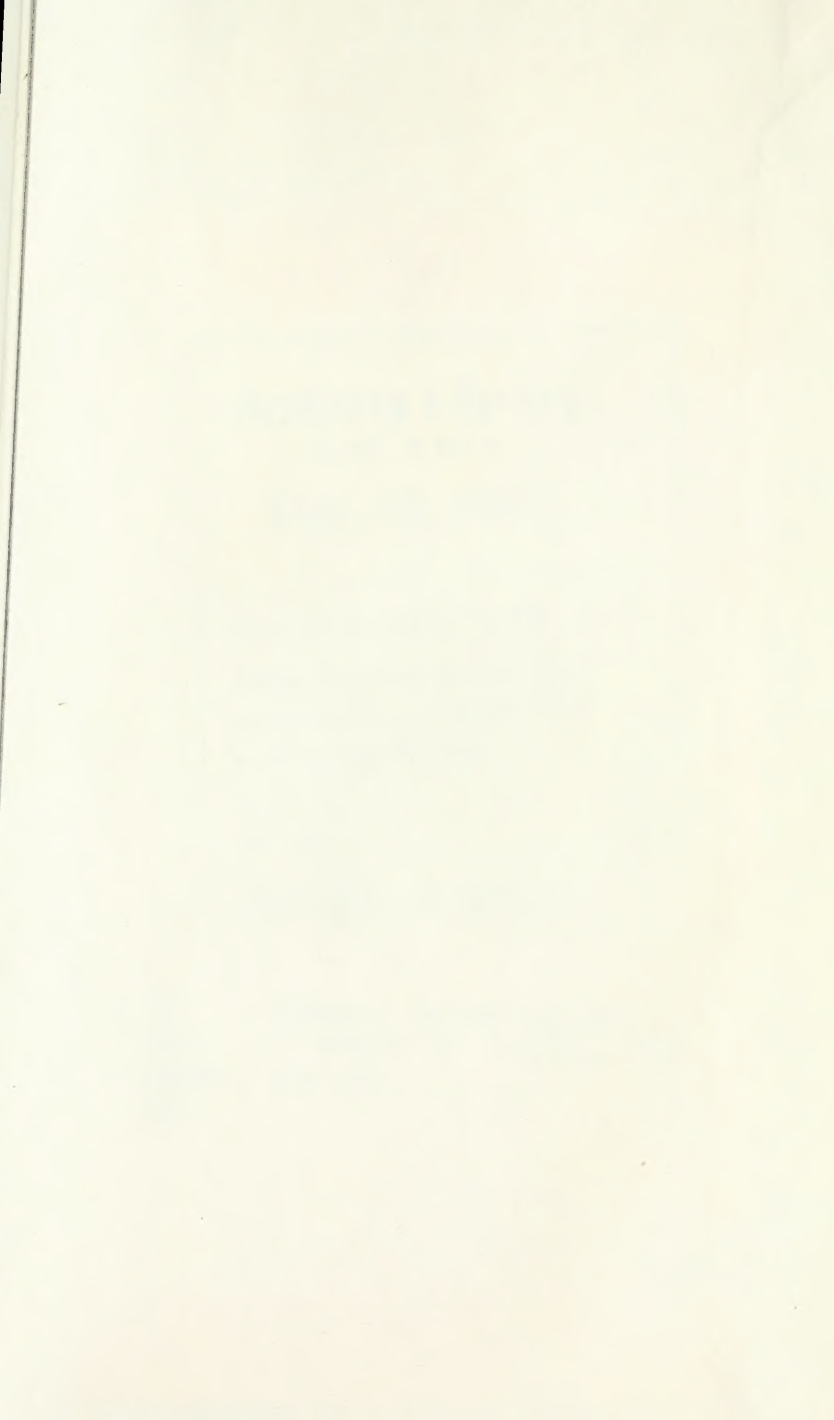
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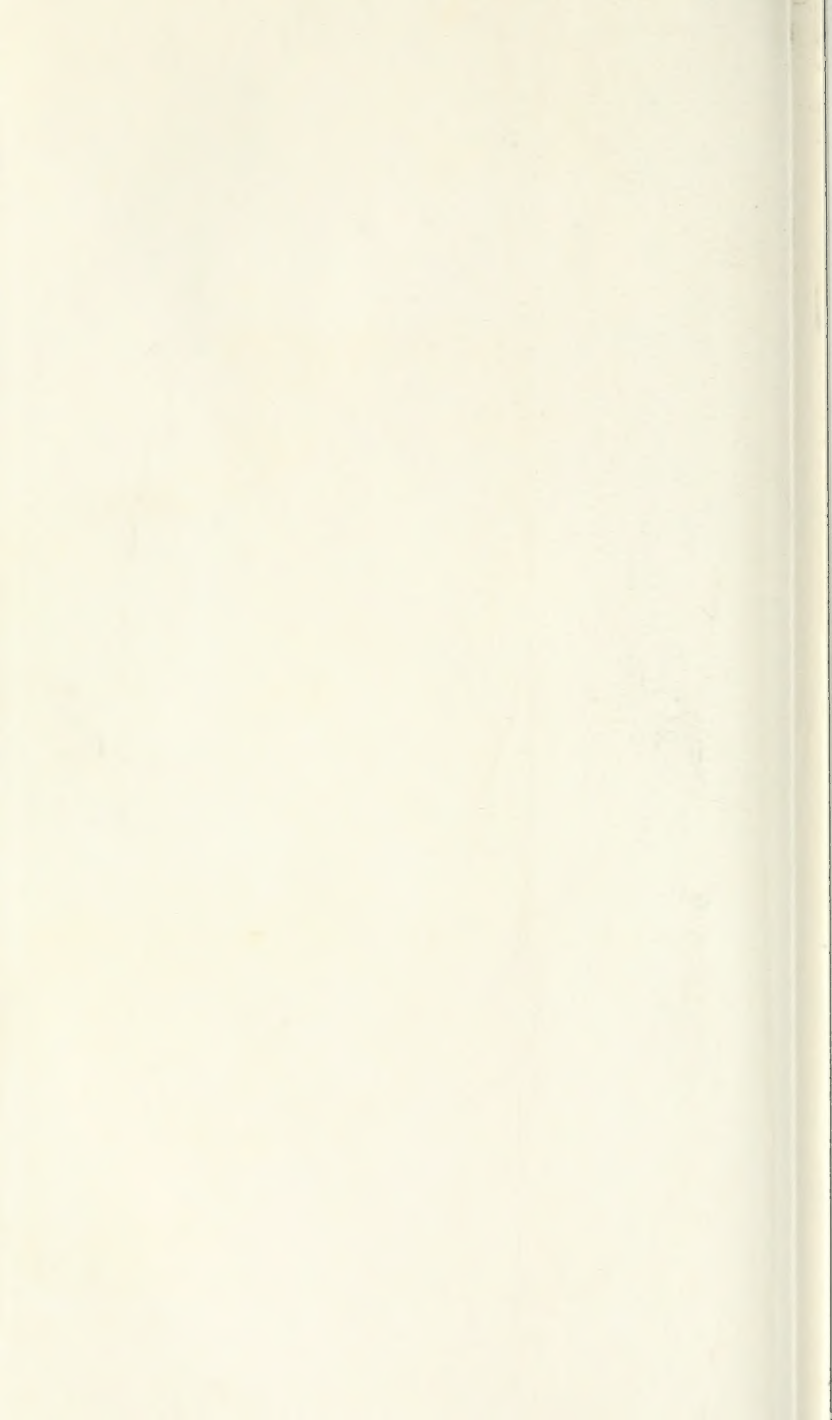
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